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WHITE PAPER A STEP TO REFORM

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LESSONS OF FINSBURY

THE report we publish this month of the appeal in the Finsbury shelter case will make depressing reading for all who have the good of English local government at heart. So long as such things can happen, none of us who are concerned in public administration, whether as officers, councillors, or ratepayers, can afford to be satisfied or complacent. For, while it is the two principals in the action who must bear both the cost and the condemnation for what has happened, many more than they must share the blame—the majority group of the councillors of Finsbury who, while clearly aware, as they must have been, of what was going on, were content tamely to submit to, and even to uphold, domination by an individual, and the ratepayers who elected most of the leading members of that council. Here, surely, is basis enough for a searching inquiry by the Ministry of Health, conducted with the fullest publicity, not only to inform the people of Finsbury what their representatives have been doing or leaving undone, but also to warn others of the dangerous waters into which civic indifference may lead.

The Case For Security.

To the local government officer, the case has other lessons. Most important is the justification it provides for the claim, often advanced but hitherto little regarded, for security of tenure for all principal officers. To some, such as the medical officer of health, the sanitary inspector, the public assistance officer, and certain others, that security has already been granted. It is recognised that these officers cannot perform the important functions entrusted to them with the necessary impartiality unless they are protected against improper pressure by members of the local authority they serve, and for this reason they may not be dismissed without the approval of the appropriate Minister. But the same protection is denied to other principal officers, and the Finsbury case is one of the results.

"The office of town clerk," said the Lord Chief Justice, "is an important part of the machinery of local government. He may be said to stand between the borough council and the ratepayers." That is an expression of judicial opinion of great importance—and if it is correct in respect of the town clerk it must be equally correct in respect of his colleagues, the treasurer, the director of education, the engineer and surveyor, the valuation officer, and others. All are responsible, in greater or lesser degree, to the ratepayers. Yet all are employed "at the pleasure" of the council, and all are thus exposed to the risk of loss of livelihood should they put their duty to the ratepayers above the pressure of a dominating member or group of the council to do that which they know to be contrary to the ratepayers' interests.

In this connection we cannot, unhappily, share the view of Mr. Justice Atkinson that dismissal in such circumstances is "unthinkable" or that of the Lord Chief Justice that for an officer to do his duty is "not so dangerous or heroic a course as it may seem" since "publicity may be safely relied upon to secure protection." Finsbury borough council indeed has itself given the lie to those sanguine comments. As readers of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE will remember, that council did, in fact, dismiss its deputy town clerk in 1943, because he had refused to accede to an improper demand made on him by Alderman Riley. By using the wartime machinery of the National Arbitration Tribunal, NALGO was able to secure the reinstatement of the deputy town clerk. But the protection provided by the National Arbitration Order and the opportunity for appeal and investigation given by the Tribunal is not available before the War and will disappear after the War, and unless other provision is made, the chief officer may once again risk facing in circumstances such as existed at Finsbury, the difficult choice of doing the right thing and losing his job or doing the wrong thing and retaining it. That is an alternative to which, in the public interest, no public servant should be exposed, and we trust that all concerned—the Government, the Ministry of Health, the local authorities, and individual citizens—will recognise the fact and provide the remedy.

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Rule by Caucus

ONE of the most disquieting features of administration at Finsbury, as disclosed both before the Tribunal and at the audit, was the operation of the party caucus. For years, it was made clear, it is this caucus, which has run the local government of Finsbury. Every important matter was considered by the caucus, meeting in private, before the council met. The council itself was no more than a rubber stamp used to confirm decisions of the caucus. Not infrequently, even debate would be forbidden, and the council as a whole required to vote on issues of which those of its members who were not party to the discussions of the caucus had no knowledge. Sometimes, should an unexpected issue arise in the council, the meeting would be adjourned to enable the caucus to decide its policy in private before presenting it to the council as a *fait accompli*. So far had this system been carried, and so normal did it appear to the leader of the council, that he made it a point of his appeal that—in the words of the Lord Chief Justice "he always disclosed everything to a meeting of the majority group, and as the majority group numbered 57 persons as against eight other members of the council, this was really equivalent to telling the council."

A Growing Evil

But the caucus is not exclusive to Finsbury. The system whereby public policy is determined, not by the people's representatives in full council assembled, but by groups meeting behind closed doors through which no alternative or critical voice may penetrate, is becoming increasingly common. It is an evil system. It is the antithesis of democracy, and if it spreads it will mean the end of local government as we know it. As a writer in "The Times Educational Supplement" wrote some weeks ago in an article on education committees:

"This caucus rule is one of the worst things in local government. In his latest book 'Everybody's Political What's What,' Mr. Bernard Shaw has a sentence which exactly meets the circumstances of those areas (in which it operates): 'At present municipal councils play at party politics by organising ovine members who do not know how to vote until a party tells them.'

"This is very true. Unfortunately, caucus rule of this kind breeds ovines. Men and women with independence of mind and judgment refuse to serve under conditions where they must pledge support to a party. Even co-opted members of the education committee must declare their party allegiance before being co-opted on to the committee. Lip service is paid to the demand that they shall be persons of experience in education. In reality, they are nothing more nor less than party hacks . . . One wonders how the new Education Act will ever be implemented in areas where such conditions hold. It is the very negation of democracy that matters should be decided at a caucus meeting held within closed doors. It is a travesty of government when, as sometimes happens, the chairman of the education committee, presiding over the public meeting of the committee, will support a certain course of action and will vote against it at the committee. The uninstructed may ask: Why this change of mind? The answer is: The caucus meeting and the party whip."

NALGO is familiar with the caucus in dealing with officers' salaries and service conditions. District officers and branch executive committees know only too well that, in areas where it operates, it is not the council they must satisfy as to the justice of their claims, but the caucus—with the result that, sometimes, an application for, say, adoption of a bonus is submitted to and accepted by, not a meeting of the establishment committee in a committee room or a meeting of the council in the council chamber, but to a private gathering of a party group—often including persons who are not members of the council—in the local pub.

So long as abuses of this kind exist, it is futile to imagine that alterations of local government boundaries and improvements in the structure of local government will bring the reforms that are needed. The real reform must come in the personnel of the council itself, and the way it conducts its business. But, while it is easy to point to the evil, it is less easy to eradicate it. The remedy lies partly in the hands of the parties themselves, and partly in the hands of the citizens who elect them. So long as the citizens remain apathetic towards the running of their local affairs, so long will abuses of this kind persist. Only a vigorous revival of responsible citizenship, combined with a widespread determination both to elect the best public representatives and to ensure that, once elected, they serve *all* the citizens they represent, will give us the clean, democratic, and progressive administration we demand. And to achieve that, a farsighted, long-term policy of public relations is essential. NALGO has initiated such a policy. Will others follow?

"HOP ON, DUCKS, P'RAPS WE GO YOUR WAY"

Published by courtesy of the "Evening Standard."

Assistance Officers' Future

WHAT is to happen to the many officers in public assistance departments when the Government's national insurance policy comes into force and their jobs become redundant? Recent letters in "Readers' Forum," and many other letters for which space was not available, have indicated a widespread and natural anxiety, reinforced by what happened in 1940, when much of the out-relief work of public assistance authorities was transferred to the Assistance Board, but many officers were not taken over.

NALGO is far from asleep on the problem. Soon after the White Paper was published, the Association wrote to Sir William Jowitt (then Minister-Designate and now Minister of National Insurance), and the Minister has since been asked to receive a deputation. NALGO's claims, which are being put with all the force the Association can command, are:

1. All local government officers (including those now on war service or work of national importance) likely to lose their jobs as a result of the national insurance legislation to be given the opportunity to transfer to the Government department which takes over their work, at salaries no less than they were receiving immediately before the transfer;
2. Permanent officers in public assistance departments to be specially considered, in view of their training, qualifications, and experience, for higher posts in the Ministry of National Insurance; and
3. Provisions for compensation of any officer suffering direct pecuniary loss as a result of the legislation.

The principle sought is that, if the work is transferred, the officer should go with it, to a job as good as he now holds; should that be impossible, then the officer should be properly compensated for any loss he suffers.

A word of explanation is due about the footnote to a letter in the December journal in which we said that NALGO had no evidence that any well-qualified officer who wanted to transfer to the Assistance Board in 1940 was not taken over. When it was written, that statement was true; the Association had had no word of complaint from any member whose application for transfer had been rejected. Correspondence received since then makes it clear that a number of well-qualified officers were not taken over, but NALGO was not informed of the fact.

On that occasion, the civil servants had claimed that all the vacancies on the Assistance Board should be reserved for them. NALGO, with representatives of the County Councils' Association and the Association of Municipal Corporations, took the matter up with the Assistance Board, and secured an agreement that 70 per cent of the vacancies should be reserved for competition among local government officers and 30 per cent allocated to civil servants.

Liberals On Reform

THERE is still no lack of doctors ready to propound remedies for the sickness of British local government, but equally there is still no unanimity in the advice they proffer. The latest prescription is that of the Liberal Party and in the light of the urgency of the disease it is scarcely unfair to describe it as milk-and-water.

The diagnosis is well enough—as far as it goes; local government is in danger of replacement by "Whitehall bureaucracy" financial burdens are ill divided betwe Treasury and town hall as well as betwe one area and another; and there is lack public interest in local government affai But little mention is made of other gra defects: the unsuitability of many areas f current needs, the overlapping of functior the complexity of local government structu or the unequal standards of service.

With so partial a definition of the defects, is not surprising th the Liberal refor do not go far. T three-tier system in t counties should retained, with so minor transfers powers. Though so amalgamation of are may be necessary ensure that ea authority controls area with adequa resources, the small authorities should preserved, includi the parish structure "the smaller a thorities," in th Liberal belief, "ha a closer contact wi the people than th larger ones." Can th writers have any know ledge of the inten local patriotism towns like Manchest and Leicester?

Admitting the nee for larger areas tha counties or coun boroughs for certa functions, the repo proposes non-electiv joint authorities "federal and con pendious and whe possible multi-pu pose."

With the intentio of their three final recommendations there wi be general agreement. These are: a highe proportion of Government grants for poore areas; uniform assessment for rating by national authority; and triennial election fo all local authorities (the whole council retirin in a block), combined with P.R. and paymer of members' out-of-pocket expenses.

A Single Ambulance Service

IS Gateshead the first local authority in th country to provide a unified public ambu lance service for all classes of patients? Fo the past 12 months, Dr. Grant, the medica officer of health informs us, the borough, wit a population of 100,000, has been running complete service, under the control of th health department. A fleet of five ambulance operates from a central depot, and is availabl to take patients, whether living in or out of th borough, to or from any of the council's fou hospitals and also to hospitals (includin voluntary hospitals) and nursing homes i Newcastle-on-Tyne. One ambulance is re served for infectious cases and has a compart ment for the removal of infected bedding; al are cleansed after each journey and disinfecte if the patient has been septic or infectious.

Gateshead's example shows that the ambu lance service can be put under single loca authority control with success.

It is the aim of "Local Government Service" to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion and expression within the Association. Unless the fact is expressly stated, therefore, views put forward in the journal—whether in the editorial columns or in signed articles—should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.

White Paper Takes First Step Towards Local Government Reconstruction

TO those who are critical of the present defects in the structure of local government, and believe that we need something much different and much better, the Minister of Health's long-promised White Paper on "Local Government during the Period of Reconstruction" will be disappointing. The qualifying words of the title indicate the Government's restricted outlook on the subject. The one positive proposal it makes is that for a standing Boundary Commission, to keep under continuous review not only the boundaries but the status of local authorities of all types—with power to give effect to its findings, subject in some instances to Ministerial and Parliamentary safeguards. This proposal was put forward three years ago by a writer in these pages and was adopted by the NALGO Reconstruction Committee—being, in fact, one of the most important and distinctive features of that committee's recommendations. None will under-estimate the importance of such a step, and we hope that none will oppose it.

Apart from this one constructive proposal, however, the White Paper is a negative document. It contemplates no fundamental change in the plan underlying the present structure, pinning its faith to a better application of that plan through the machinery of continuous review. Anything different was hardly to be expected after the Prime Minister's statement last August that the Government did not consider any case to have been made out for drastic changes, though it was satisfied that "within the general framework of the county and county borough system there was need and scope for improvements."

Risk of Piecemeal Changes

The White Paper elaborates this view, making the most of the fact that there is no agreement on the shape the structure should take in future, and of the argument that fundamental immediate change would impede progress with the new social measures such as health and education. It would certainly take a long time to settle the principles of a new structure, and perhaps longer still to bring it into being. There is much to be said therefore for the Government's point of view that the wiser policy is not to disrupt the existing mechanism at a time when it will have to bear a heavier load than ever, and will be called upon for its maximum effort. Against this, it might be argued that, before new tasks are undertaken, we should first see that there is a suitable machine to undertake them. The force of this argument depends on the efficiency and adaptability of the present structure; and it is evidently the Government's view that its defects are not so great as to call for something entirely new, and that it can accommodate the new or developing post-war services. The current controversies on the administrative arrangements for the establishment of a comprehensive medical service, and the restoration of the fire service to local authority control, do not lend much support to this latter view; and there still seems a danger that the new tasks will call for piecemeal alterations on a substantial scale.

The essential proposals of the White Paper are, then, a better application of the present plan and improved machinery to secure its re-adjustment from time to time. It does, however, contemplate some development of the existing structure to meet new requirements. It recognises, though with an air of reluctance and doubt, that some services need to be handled over areas transcending even the counties and county boroughs. But it rejects decisively the proposal of the Labour Party for directly elected regional councils for these services; contemplating, instead, the joint committee or the joint board, while admitting the prevalent dislike of indirect election, which joint bodies involve, and the other disadvantages to which they are notoriously subject. The NALGO Committee contemplated similar machinery for the treatment of the "outsize" services; but made the vital distinction that the joint bodies should be "scheme-making" authorities only, leaving administration to the all-purposes authorities which could integrate it over the whole field. Such a division of function, the committee claimed, would be conducive to both efficiency and economy. The White Paper touches only briefly on this aspect, in a reference (unsupported by argument or evidence) to the difficulty of separating administrative from planning functions; and does not disclose which course the Government proposes to follow.

On the other hand, it does implicitly recognise the danger of allowing joint bodies to proliferate over a large number of services, so that a separate body assumes control of each; and expresses a pious hope that it may be possible to make these joint bodies compendious later on "if experience should show such a course to be desirable". Some may think that a century and a half's experience has amply demonstrated the virtues of the compendious principle already. Nevertheless, if the joint bodies are to be executive, as distinct from scheme-making, the effect might well be to bring about a considerable change in the existing structure and system. It is perhaps with this possibility in mind that the White Paper acknowledges that "experience of the working of the new services may disclose the need of more radical alteration of the local government structure."

What Do We Need?

Statesmanship is foresight. Is the Ministry of Health unable to form any idea of the probable future requirements of the services—old and new? Why has the Government not attempted to lay down some general principles as to what is to be expected of a local government structure, the requirements it should fulfil, and the conditions it must meet? This is surely the first step towards clarifying the issues. The aim of the structure is efficient administration; due—but not undue—recognition of sentiment and tradition being elements in efficient administration, if broadly enough conceived. Why then do we not try to formulate some idea of what we mean by "efficiency" and analyse the ways in which it can be influenced by structure? Possibilities of this kind may be opened up through the proposal in the White Paper that the Minister, after reference to Parliament, should be empowered to give directions to the Boundary Commission from time to time. The Ministry may intend, though it does not say, that such directions should include some prescription of the general principles which the Commission must observe. If this is the intention, is it not desirable to begin to formulate some of these principles now? The Government may reply that such a process would be unsettling and is better deferred. On the other hand, the need to form some idea of what the present structure can and can not do, and of the shape of a new structure, is becoming urgent. The administrative dilemma facing the Home Secretary in the restoration of the fire brigades service to the local authorities has been made plain within the last week or two, and provides little support for the complacent outlook of the Ministry of Health. If larger units are necessary, the sentiment of the Home Office, seems to be against indirectly elected joint bodies of the kind promised in the White Paper.

The misgivings of the local authorities on the financial issues are not taken very seriously by the White Paper, which expresses a belief that relationships of central and local finance in general, and the block grant formula in particular, are elastic enough to level up conditions between poorer and richer areas, and distribute the grant on the basis of local needs. On the whole, we agree with this view, without condoning the imperfections of the present formula.

It is pleasing to learn that county boundaries will for the first time become subject to continuous review. This is a much needed reform and, provided the counties recognise the need for changes and realise that their boundaries are perhaps the most artificial and anomalous of any, should do much to consolidate them as continuing units of local government. On the other hand, the boroughs and urban districts should gain confidence in the knowledge that the reviewing authority will no longer be itself an interested party, as was the county council under the review procedure of 1929. But do the boroughs and districts view with equanimity the possibility referred to in the footnote on page 5 of "introducing the county council as a co-ordinating element," and the statement there made that this has been done with success in the sphere of town and country planning, housing, and water supply? Do they accept as true the suggestion that there has been such co-ordination in housing and water supply? Is a county council even a planning authority?

New County Boroughs

There is no indication of whether the limit of 75,000 for county borough status is to be changed either up or down; but there is an interesting suggestion that the change to county borough status needs to be made before rather than after the attainment of whatever level is fixed, since the authority which is to administer the services eventually should be enabled to plan them beforehand.

To sum up, let us be thankful for the White Paper, on the whole, because of its proposal for a Boundary Commission. This step is urgently called for, whatever view one takes of the present structure or the need for a new one. Even those who believe the present structure still to be sound in principle and far from obsolete, admit its many defects, and recognise them as springing not from its underlying conceptions but from its bad application in practice. Since a good deal of this misapplication has resulted from the inadequate machinery for re-adjusting the structure from time to time to changed environment and development there is obvious need for a continuous process of review (though all will recognise the virtue of the Government's proposal for ten year intervals between changes). And if we do want a new shape, it will take a body like the Commission to embody and apply it, and cast the area pattern into its new moulds.

Curiously enough the White Paper puts forward the proposal for a Boundary Commission with little argument for this particular mechanism of change and re-adjustment. It may well be that to this proposal the Government had already secured the agreement of the local authorities in the discussions held before the White Paper was published. We hope that this is so, as we have no doubt that the proposal has the overwhelming support of local government officers.

How the Boundary Commission Should Review Rural Areas

By N. F. E. BROWNING, D.P.A. (Lond.), F.C.C.S., F.R.V.A., Clerk to Tenterden R.D.C.

WHILE some will be disappointed at the unspectacular nature of the White Paper on local government, others will be relieved. My own view is that the Government has wisely decided to put first things first. The demobilised soldier, the munition worker returning to his home, the bombed out, and the hundreds of thousands of young men and women setting up home for the first time, will be more interested in homes and houses than they will in the form of the body that provides those homes and houses. Had some reconstruction scheme as comprehensive as that of the N A L G O Reconstruction Committee been adopted for execution now, the resulting upheaval would have been so great as to make an early start with the housing programme impossible—that is if the programme had been left in the hands of local government at all. At the same time, I notice with approval that the proposals are not permanent, and that should the need for a more radical alteration of the local government structure be disclosed in the future, that alteration will be made. This, however, should not be necessary if the organs of public opinion educate the public how to use the existing machinery.

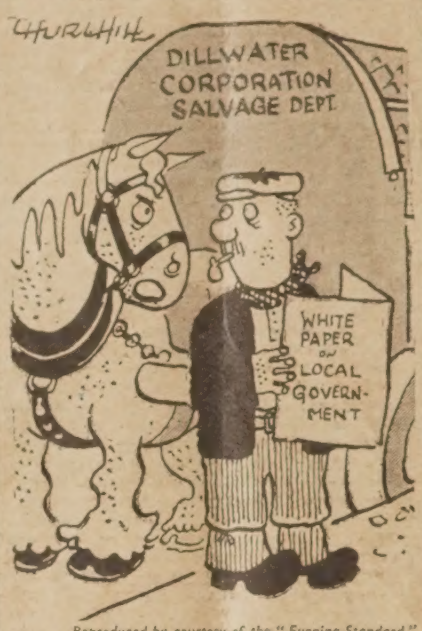
Systematic Review

But the White Paper is not entirely negative. Its proposal to set up a Boundary Commission will remove many objections inherent in the present systems of boundary adjustment. In place of concurrent and often conflicting reviews of county districts by the county councils and private Bill extensions by the county boroughs, we are to have one systematic review of the whole country, excepting Middlesex and London. This will reconcile—as far as it is possible to reconcile—the conflicting interests of counties and county boroughs, will eliminate some of the smaller units of both types and will, I hope, straighten out some of the outmoded county boundaries, a notorious example of which is the Bowland District of Yorkshire which, although only 20 miles from Preston, seat of the Lancaster county council, is about 50 miles from Wakefield, seat of the West Riding county council, in whose area it is, but which many of its inhabitants can reach only after a journey through part of Lancashire.

If the Commission is to be a success, it is essential that it should consist of men (and, may we hope, women) who collectively have an intimate knowledge of the problems of local government in all kinds of areas and all types of authority, and that it should hold a local inquiry before making any scheme to alter the boundaries of any local authority.

The Government does not appear to have made up its mind on the details of the general directions to be given to the Commission but contents itself with a few generalisations on areas, the linking of town and country, and the position of county boroughs.

I hope that, when the final directions are issued, too much emphasis is not laid on large areas for two important reasons. The first is the difficulty for councillors and officers alike of managing a widely scattered area. When county districts were reviewed in the 1930's, some counties plumped for excessively large rural districts—with the result that the rural district has often had to split its area for administrative purposes. When this happens one wonders what sound reason, if any, lay behind the fusion of old districts to create such unwieldy new ones. As one prominent public man, who himself at the review advocated large districts, said recently: "What is the virtue of having a council one half of whose councillors know nothing and, consequently, care less, about the affairs of the other half,



Reproduced by courtesy of the "Evening Standard."

"If they think I'm going to start in learning a lot of new boundaries at my time of life, they can think again!"

with the result that its services are not properly controlled?" There are many others who, having had experience of the working of large rural districts, now think the same.

The second reason for urging that districts are not made too large is that we want our rural councils to be democratic. Besides the landowner and large farmer, we want to see serving on them the village shopkeeper, the schoolmaster, the small working farmer, the farm labourer, the rural artisan and, lastly, but most essentially, the busy mother for whom we provide our most important service, housing—and none of these have the time to travel long distances to and from meetings. These folk, representing the bulk of our rural population, are largely unrepresented on our present councils. In the renaissance which is sweeping the countryside, country folk are becoming politically and socially conscious. If, therefore, the Commission so adjusts boundaries that every parish within a rural district has a reasonably accessible administrative centre, there is no doubt that these classes will be fully represented. It is essential in the national interest that they should be represented, for, while good local government can play a great part in maintaining a contented people, it can be good only if the authorities are truly democratic and representative. Local authorities which consist of representatives of one class only can never be really sound, for however benevolent their intentions may be, they have not sufficient experience of the needs of the other classes to make adequate provision for them.

The paragraphs on the linking of town and country are interesting, but their precise meaning is not too clear. If the intention is that country towns are to be enlarged by the additio of surrounding undeveloped land which, ha they been rural parishes, would have bee included within their boundaries, no stron objection can be taken. I hope, however, th what is intended is a serious attempt to lin country towns with their satellite village That would be a progressive proposal, warran ing general approval.

Country towns differ in no fundament respect from the surrounding villages either their physical characteristics or their problem of government. Sometimes they have slight larger populations for, being centres, there a proportionately more shops and perhaps rural industry or two. Therefore, when the country towns are too small to form econom units of their own, the logical solution is integrate them with their surrounding rur areas in such a way as to preserve to the some measure of local autonomy while sharin the same administrative machine. This cou be done by retaining borough councils wi the right of claiming to administer, within t general framework of rural district coun organisation, the housing and public heal services within the boroughs as well as givin them the powers of parish councils. Th boroughs, of course, would have an appropria representation on the rural councils. In t case of country towns which are at prese urban districts, their parish councils wou have similar statutory rights. While the suggestions are primarily designed to reta the status of old country towns which wou otherwise be faced with extinction as effecti units, there is no logical reason why th should not be applied to those other count towns which are in themselves econom units, provided that they really are count towns and not small industrial towns in t country.

Bigger Grants Needed

Many rural administrators will feel sor disappointment that no mention is made the financial paragraphs of the peculiar c cumstances of rural districts. Many of consider that the time is ripe for a revisio of the basis of apportionment of the gener exchequer grant between the county distric To reduce the amount payable per head rural districts to one-fifth of the amount pa able to the urban authorities on the groun that the former have no responsibilities f roads and less public health functions is n fair. Most unclassified roads in the count are minor highways enjoyed by the townsm in his pursuit of pleasure, but unclassifi town roads are almost entirely service roa provided for the advantage of abutting fro agers. The suggestion that rural districts ha less public health functions is today untenab certainly from the point of view of cost. T expensive nature of the rural health servic is recognised by the special grants for wat and sewerage schemes, but, on many groun the most satisfactory way of meeting t expenditure would be by giving rural counc a more equitable share of the general exchequ grant.

Finally, I hope that when the Commissi makes its review, it will not lay undue empha on sentiment. The criteria by which lo authorities of every type must be judged ar Has the authority sufficient resources to provi all the modern services for its inhabitants at high standard? Is it in fact providing su services? And is its area the most suitab one practicable for democratic and econom working? Sentiment cannot give the answ to any of these questions. Nevertheless, should play only a small part; it must remembered that it is of the county of th origin that most people boast and that f have any strong sentimental attachment f any other local government unit or geographi area.

Regional Authority Essential to Carry Out Abercrombie Plan

By EDWARD KAY

SIR PATRICK ABERCROMBIE'S *Greater London Plan* 1944 received generous notice in the press and need not be described in detail here. What will be attempted, after a statement of its main contents, is an examination of the chief obstacles which stand in the way of its realisation, and a discussion of its bearing on local government in the region.

The plan covers an area of some 2,000 square miles extending roughly 30 miles outwards from central London, excluding 118 square miles of the administrative county. This area is to be divided into four rings, within the inner three of which—the inner urban, the suburban, and the green belt—new building (other than in replacement of existing buildings) would be virtually prohibited. Maximum densities are prescribed for the inner rings, as for the county of London, and in order to achieve these more than a million persons would have to be moved out from the central areas.

Some of these people would go into existing L.C.C. and Croydon housing schemes ; some into towns in the outer ring ; others to new satellite towns around London and to towns outside the metropolitan area, some at a great distance. Besides the movement of people, their work would have to be transferred, and the plan envisages the removal of 1720 factories combined with severe restriction on the establishment of new industry in the inner rings. Ten new satellite towns are proposed. The agricultural character of the outer ring is to be safeguarded. Improved transport services are outlined. The linking-up and extension of open spaces and the green belt are provided for.

Imaginative—and Practical

These proposals are both imaginative and practical. Their adoption would relieve the overcrowding of London's central areas ; reduce the wearisome burden of daily travel ; facilitate the lay-out of future houses ; make access to the country easier for the townsman and give him more opportunity of healthy recreation in rural surroundings, while at the same time protecting agricultural land from wasteful use ; foster the growth of well-balanced towns with a suitable mixture of residential and industrial building so located as to avoid mutual interference while ensuring accessibility to both ; improve the transport system, whether by road, rail, or air ; and generally enable the community of London to make the most of its economic resources and develop to the full the advantages of neighbourly co-operation.

Perhaps the most effective way of realising the need for the plan is to imagine what London might be like if it developed, over the next twenty years, as it was allowed to grow between the wars—when the population of the region increased by more than 2,000,000, and the built-up area by some hundreds of square miles. London is so valuable a market and so conveniently situated for many types of manufacture, and for the distribution of nearly all, that industrialists, if unorganised, would tend to expand still further their undertakings in the area. Houses, factories, and other buildings would grow up sporadically all the way to Brighton and Haslemere and Reading ; farm land would become cinema sites ; the unit cost of public services would rise even higher ; roads and rails would grow more congested.

The waste involved in excessive travelling, in the wrong use of land, in traffic delays, might be assessed arithmetically ; but no exact measure is possible of the ever-growing burden on the nervous and physical energy of an overcrowded population denied adequate housing room and facilities for recreation and contact with country life. Nor must the strategic dangers be overlooked in the era of rocket and flying bomb. Already one-fifth of the population of Britain, with a high proportion of the economic and administrative activities of the country, is concentrated in one small area ; if London expands further, then instead of an island of 90,000 square miles, most of which a would-be conqueror would have to occupy, Britain will in effect be a minute and extremely vulnerable country of 2,600 square miles, the destruction or occupation of which would involve the defeat and conquest of the remainder. The London Plans are necessary for health, for security, and for the personal happiness of its citizens. What are the obstacles, real or imaginary, which are in the way of their realisation ?

No Costlier Than Chaos

The objections which lurk in the minds of many well-intentioned citizens, and which are so easily exploited by those with an axe to grind in resisting organised development, are threefold : that it is too vast a scheme to be practicable ; that it is too costly ; and that it involves too much interference with private liberty. Let us examine these.

Is the plan really so vast in its intentions ? The test is simple ; let us compare what is now proposed with what actually took place between the two wars. The plan wants to move, at most, 1,200,000 people ; between 1919 and 1939 the population of the Region rose by over 2,000,000 (a growth largely due to migration—60 per cent of London's population were born elsewhere). The plan suggests that 1720 factories should move out of central London. In the seven pre-war years alone, 1573 new factories were opened in Greater London. If changes at this rate took place without organised direction, the task of redesigning the pattern of London's life under rational control could easily be accomplished in a far shorter time.

And the cost ?. Will it necessarily cost more to rebuild shattered London on a plan than haphazard ? Most of the rehousing, reconstruction of factories, provision of new schools and other public buildings must be undertaken whether we have a plan or not. Transport costs and delays and damage in transit would be lessened if Londoners lived near their work and had a rational system of roads and rails. The economic waste of using land for wrong purposes would be cut out. "Who can estimate," asks Sir Patrick, "the cost of fatigue, loss of health and loss of leisure which will be eliminated if the proposals in this plan are carried out ?" And he concludes, with characteristic modesty : "The unplanned way is not likely to cost less !"

This Freedom

Finally, does planning mean greater interference with personal freedom ? Again the answer is found by comparing proposals with experience. The miner who left South Wales in the depression to find work (at last) on the Great West Road had no freedom to do otherwise. The millions who flocked into Greater London had to follow their daily bread. Perhaps a few business men had a feeling of liberty to found their factory at Park Royal or at Dagenham ; but they too were slaves of economic forces and their freedom was largely illusory. For these unreal freedoms the plan would substitute deliberate choice by the community as to the shape which the collective life is to assume and as to the methods whereby it may be controlled.

The carrying out of the plan implies extensive changes in the local life of many areas. It means that inner areas must shed some of their population and their economic activities ; that some towns must expand and some rural areas must cease to live by agriculture alone. Ten new towns are to grow out of hamlets and green fields ; local authorities may rise from rural to urban status ; there will be dramatic changes in rateable values. But the effect of the plan on local government will go deeper than this : as it says (page 180) : "The outlines of the plan may be sketched by one mind ; further, these outlines may be firmly held in place and continuously applied by a central office ; but the infilling of the whole will be the work of the elected local authorities, combining in suitable groups for this purpose."

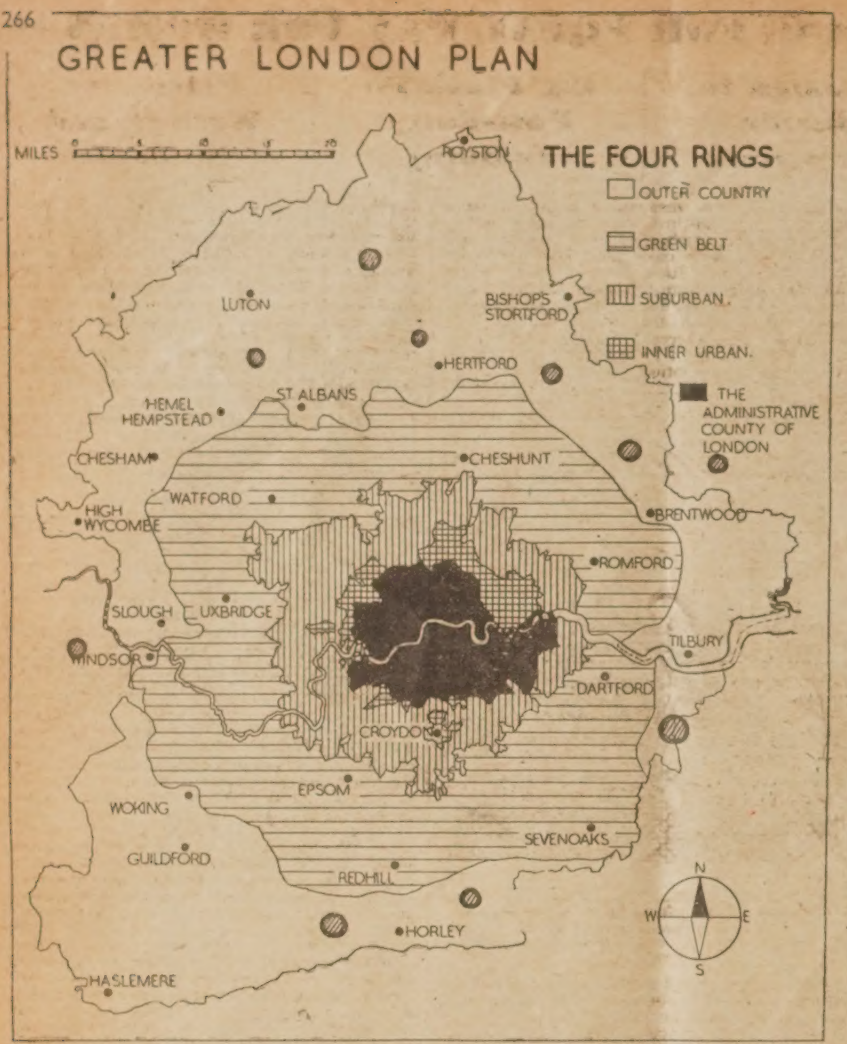
There are 143 planning authorities in the region ; over the areas of only 22 have joint planning schemes so far been prepared. There are too many authorities and hitherto they have lacked the motive to formulate co-operatively a design for their areas. But, however willing they might be, how can so vast a series of units hope to achieve a common interest ? How can Dagenham and Slough, Wood Green and Horley, see the economic and social problems of London's life from a single point of view ? No matter how broad their public spirit, some authorities must favour industrial development when they should aim at stability of population, while perhaps a "select" outer residential area will wish to retain its present character though the needs of London as a whole dictate a change.

Supreme Planning Authority

The point is so important that it merits further examination. The plan contains chapters of exceptional interest in which local characteristics are described and the best future for each locality is tentatively assessed. Let us see what it has to say of Watford, for which "no population increase is suggested." It is "one of the most congested towns in the region," and "the only expansion of Watford itself which is proposed will be that needed to cover the internal development of that part of its population which will be rehoused after rebuilding the central area." And yet the policy of Watford, as an independent unit of local government, is certainly not one of what its go-ahead citizens would probably call stagnation. On the other hand, do the wealthy residents of Holmwood, near Dorking, fancy the creation of a satellite town on its green acres ? Or would the railway interests which seem to determine development policy in Buckinghamshire favour restrictions at Beaconsfield or Chesham ?

What can be done to meet such powerful local feelings which will doubtless be at variance with wider interests ? A mere reduction in the number of local authorities will not of itself suffice, for it might replace 143 smallish bodies by a lesser number of larger and more powerful ones. In the moderate words of the plan "it would appear desirable" to create a single authority with overriding planning powers for the whole region.

Into the constitution and detailed functions of the supreme planning authority the plan does not enter. It might be a "Board comprising a small number of eminent men of affairs, several of whom would be full-time members." It would function "not only administratively, supervising . . . the statutory schemes, but as an executive body, carrying out over the whole region such work as, for instance, that of a Regional Open Space Authority . . . A Housing Corporation . . . an Industrial Controller



The area covered by the plan, showing the four rings and (shaded circles) the ten new satellite towns into which it is proposed that part of the population displaced from the central area should be moved.

. . . a Regional Public Cleansing Department . . . a Population Adviser."

But if the Board is to exercise such wide executive powers as these, surely now is the time to deal comprehensively with the problem of London government and to establish a Greater London Authority on the normal basis of democratic local government. To establish an *ad hoc* Board, apparently without election and with extensive powers, would challenge the accepted principles of British rule and would find few defenders. Let us instead at last grasp the nettle and reconstitute London local government. An authority covering the whole region based on electoral areas each with a population of (say) 75,000 would provide a council by no means too large for the ordinary purposes of local government. To such a major regional body could be assigned all supervisory planning functions for the region, as well as a number of other local government duties which call for a large administrative area or can best be conducted on common lines for a large population: the larger housing schemes, main drainage and sewage, main highways and bridges, water, hospitals, open spaces, and possibly education, are examples.

That there are objections to so large an administrative area must be admitted: contact between electors and elected will not be easy; even contact between the citizens and the administrative officials will present a problem, but this can be lessened by a system of local offices. But the immensity of London is not something which this generation has chosen of its own free will; it is a fact which history has presented to us; our task is to make the best we can of a city so grossly swollen that its ends are fifty miles apart and its citizens can never all live in neighbourly association. Their common interests are nevertheless real and urgent, and to serve them a machinery of over-all communal administration is overdue.

But democracy and efficient administration alike demand that there shall also be some form of more truly local government, and for this purpose what could be more suitable than the division of the region into a series of multi-purpose authorities, each enjoying wide powers of self-rule, subject only to the leadership and co-ordination of the regional authority? Besides numerous executive duties, each minor authority, enjoying a status little less than that of a county borough, would have planning powers within its area, subject only to their exercise in harmony with the Master Plan for the region. There need be no fear that under such an organisation local life would wither; as a current example of sustained vitality in a state of nominal subordination we may point to the metropolitan boroughs which even their severest critics do not charge with inanition.

The relations between the two sets of authority may be summarised thus: apart from the specific functions reserved for the major authority, its duties would consist in the prescription of standards for the various services, and by means of control over finance (e.g., through a grant system) ensuring that the appropriate minima were observed by all minor authorities. In this way, some of the hortatory and supervisory powers of Whitehall might be won back for local government.

This sketch of the way in which the problem of London Government might at long last be tackled is offered because Sir Patrick Abercrombie's plan seems inadequate in this respect. Without a logical and comprehensive system of local administration based upon popular interest and feeling, his plan will never come into complete being and what parts of it are realised will fail to win the support of the citizens.

The plan will arouse intense antagonism (at first perhaps concealed but growing bolder and more open with time) from a host of vested interests. The citizens of London have seen their town bombed by the enemy and damaged almost as much by ill-considered shapeless unhealthy growth, while their countryside has been devastated. They want an orderly town, with comely houses and public buildings, open spaces adequate in size and suitably placed, a modernised transport system, work-places well-sited within easy access of their homes, and the cost of their public services equalised over the whole area. They want to be able to play their part, through elected representatives, in the local and the regional creation of these things. The plans show them the way, but it will be hard and will call for struggle and self-sacrifice. But now that they have been shown the way, Londoners can take it!

ORDER IN ORDERS

A Cure for "Circularitis"

IF all the headaches suffered by local government officers in trying to find a way through the maze of war-time legislation, with its accompanying extending, qualifying, and amending statutory rules and orders, were rolled into one, they would provide a pain fit for a Hitler. Unhappily, that cannot be done, and the headaches must be endured.

But not invariably. As many officers now know, the National Council of Social Service provided a key to the maze quite early in the war. Its Citizens Advice Notes, summarising, explaining, indexing the various Acts, orders, regulations, circulars, and kept constantly up-to-date, have proved more effective than aspirin to those who know the secret. Latterly, the Notes have been difficult to come by, but a new edition has now been brought out and a fair number of copies are available to new subscribers for an initial subscription of £2 2s. The busy officer and, indeed, everyone who needs to keep up-to-date with the doings of Whitehall will find them indispensable—particularly since it is intended to continue the service throughout the post-war years of reconstruction—and should write at once for details to the National Council of Social Service, 26, Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

Town Planning—A Career of the Future

TOWN planning is likely to be one of the careers of the future, offering great scope for local government officers, for whom the Town Planning Institute, 11, Arundel Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, has prepared suitable examinations.

Courses in town and country planning recognised by the institute are available at London (University College and Polytechnic), Edinburgh (College of Art), Newcastle (King's College), Leeds (School of Architecture), Manchester University, Liverpool University, and Nottingham (College of Arts and Crafts). Students obtaining the diploma are exempt from the institute's examinations and may apply direct for associate membership.

In addition, the College of Estate Management, Ricksmanworth, Herts, provides a correspondence course for the examinations of the institute.

Local education authorities now have wide powers for adult education and, where necessary, application should be made to them for particulars of facilities and financial assistance available.

N.E.C. APPROVES CASE FOR EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN

Conference at Blackpool in June

Campaign to Educate New Voters

Big Plans for Post-Entry Training

Prizes for Writers and Students

NALGO's case for equal pay for women with men, as submitted to the Royal Commission on Equal Pay, was formally approved by the National Executive Council when it met in London on January 6.

The Association, the statement points out, with a membership of 130,000, of whom 35,000 are women, has been committed to the policy of equal pay for equal work, combined with equality of opportunity for men and women, since 1936. Of the 15 Provincial Whitley Councils by which the salaries and conditions of service of local government officers are increasingly being regulated, five have declared in favour of equal pay.

Today, however, the number of women receiving pay equal to that of men doing similar work is small. An inquiry conducted by the Association among a sample group of 1,920 *permanent* women officers serving various types of local authority (excluding nurses and others whose pay is governed by the Rushcliffe Committee recommendations) showed that 40 per cent were doing the same class of work as men but for lower pay, 54 per cent were not doing the same class of work as men and only 6 per cent were getting the same pay as men for the same class of work. Typical instances of different rates of pay for similar work quoted in the statement include :

	Men	Women
Librarian	£374	£260
Legal Assistant	£500—£650	£450
Relieving Officer ..	£250—£300	£186
Shops Act Inspector ..	£345—£375	£160—£190
Accountancy Assistant ..	£225—£265	£169—£197 12s.

An example of the distinction drawn between men and women is provided by a recent advertisement by a county council for a temporary clerk in the education department. For the same post, calling for the same qualifications and experience, this offered a salary of £240 (plus bonus) to a man and £180 (plus bonus) to a woman.

Similar disparities are evident in the grading schemes adopted by most local authorities of any size or importance, and the following examples are quoted as typical :

COUNTY COUNCIL

Grade	Men	Women
A ..	£50+10—£90 with automatic progression to :	Same as for men
B ..	£125+15—£245	£100+10—£180
C ..	£250+15—£310	£190+15—£250
D ..	£325+15—£370	£255+15—£300
E ..	£390+15—£450	£310+15—£355
F ..	£475+25—£550	£365+25—£440

COUNTY BOROUGH

Grade	Men	Women
A ..	£130 at 21	£120 at 21
B ..	£130—£200	£120—£145
C ..	£130—£250	£145—£170
D ..	£200—£300	£170—£200
E ..	£250—£350	£200—£250
F ..	£350—£450	—
G ..	£350—£750	—

While it is difficult to define the factors which determine the differentiation in rates of pay in the above scales, the statement continues, two matters are relevant—equality of opportunity, and the operation of the "marriage bar."

On the first, attention is drawn to the fact that 54 per cent of the women of whom inquiry was made were not doing the same class of work as men. These were mainly shorthand typists, machine operators, secretaries, and telephone operators. On this fact, the statement observes :

"The introduction of female labour into local government in some volume arose largely after the last war, and it has been growing in extent since that time. Possibly, without any pre-conceived ideas, the work allotted to the majority of women in local government had been confined within narrow limits, with the result that there has grown up a sort of general understanding that shorthand-typing and kindred work is woman's work, and work which she is specially fitted to perform. Consequently, many girls leaving school have not been encouraged to aspire to anything "higher" than shorthand-typing, and parents are equally culpable with others for that state of things. That many of those women are fitted to perform duties of a more responsible nature has been proved during war-time when they have undertaken work to which they were unaccustomed and which in some cases they have performed with distinction. Such women, and others showing similar promise, should be encouraged to qualify themselves for higher classes of work than that to which they have normally been restricted. Yet, whereas inducements for improvement are offered to male juniors by way of expectation of promotion, the woman entrant to

"For what do English maidens desire equality of opportunity?"
(With apologies to J. Carver's Christmas card in the December journal.)

the service is deterred in the knowledge that her efforts are rewarded not upon an equal basis with the men, but upon an unproven estimate of her economic circumstances. Thus, it is claimed, are the gifts of many women lost to the service."

Retention of the marriage bar, the statement declares, is a vital factor, influencing inequality of pay and opportunity. Believing that "marriage wastage" limits the duration of a woman's effectiveness, employers are reluctant to open to women the door to higher posts.

"Such a practice," it is added, "presupposes that for the most part women will leave the service to marry, whereas, according to our findings, a large proportion are by force of circumstances obliged to make a career for themselves. Of the 1,920 women concerned in the Association's inquiry, 98 per cent find it essential that they should earn their own living. Nearly all of those women are single, and many have rendered long service to the local authorities. It will be seen from the following statement that practically 60 per cent are over 30 years of age, and more than 30 per cent are over 40 years of age :

Age	No. of Women in group	Percentage of total
Under 21	118	6.1
21—30	641	33.4
31—40	566	29.5
41—50	407	21.2
Over 50	176	9.2
Age not stated ..	12	.6

Of the 40 per cent of women who, though doing work similar to that of men, are receiving lower rates of pay, the statement finds no justification for the distinction made, adding :

"On grounds of equity alone, the 'rate for the job' should be paid, and it is, indeed, difficult to understand how there can be any opposition to the principle. It is believed that these distinctions are based on the assumption that a woman's financial commitments are less than those of a man, or less than those which he normally expects to have. The results of the inquiry indicate that any justification for this assumption which there may have been in the past is now out of date 32 per cent of the women making the returns maintain their own establishments and, of those, 6 per cent have, in addition, to contribute to the maintenance of their parents. A further 48 per cent, whilst living at home, contribute to the general upkeep of the household and in many cases support or partially support aged parents. The only consideration should be the efficient discharge of allotted duties ; and where such duties are performed side by side with men and equally as well, the women should receive similar rates of pay.

"Apart from salary differentiation, no distinctions are drawn with regard to general conditions of service. Women normally receive similar sick and holiday allowances, and their hours of duty correspond with those of men. Recruitment, in so far as posts are concerned which are open to both sexes, demands the same standard from both ; the cost of training is the same for both, and the expenses involved in retaining mastery over the job by educational and other means, and in maintaining a way of living commensurate with the status of a public official, are no less for women than for men.

"In supporting the principle of equal pay," the statement concludes "the Association is not unmindful of its implication. In the professional classes, where the principle is applied, equal pay is accepted as a matter of course and has given general satisfaction. That would seem to imply that different standards of assessment are made for different sections of women, and that, whilst equality is conceded in the higher ranks, for some indefinable reason a different yardstick is applied to the lower ranks. Where the principle has not been operated, the Association is of opinion that, whilst certain difficulties might arise during the period of adjustment, the result of its application would be that local authorities would have a wider range of selection in their appointments ; that it would be encouragement to women to know that their efforts would not be depreciated merely on the grounds of their sex ; and that it would act as a stimulus to the men to enhance their qualifications, and thus effect greater all-round efficiency. As the majority of women must earn their living, the earmarking of positions in favour of men induces a sense of frustration. The real test should be—who is the best fitted to carry out a certain piece of work ? If a woman is appointed after careful selection, the pay should be related to the job and not to the person holding it. Any extraneous question which may arise from the traditional view that man is the breadwinner should be settled by machinery of the kind contemplated in the scheme for National Insurance at present under consideration by the Government."

Other matters dealt with by the National Executive Council included :

Conference at Blackpool—This year's annual Conference is to be held at Blackpool during the week beginning June 11. Conference itself will extend over three full days—from Tuesday, June 12, to Thursday, June 14. On the afternoon of Monday, June 11, there will be meetings of branch public relations officers and education correspondents who are among the delegates, probably followed in the evening by a reception ; and Friday, June 15, will be devoted to annual meetings of the ancillaries. Arrangements will be in the hands of the Blackpool branch, which made such admirable arrangements for the 1938 Conference—one of the most successful ever held. The branch has given the warning, however, that delegates will be unable this year to expect comparable facilities. There is much less accommodation than in peacetime, and early booking will be essential. Full information is being sent direct to branch secretaries from Headquarters.

Retirement of Mr. J. B. Swinden—Mr. J. B. SWINDEN, deputy general secretary and organising secretary of NALGO, who was due to retire on superannuation in March, told the Council that he had been invited by the Secretary for the Colonies to go to Mauritius to preside over a committee appointed by the Governor to investigate the terms and conditions of employment of civil servants in the colony, including also questions of recruitment, appointment, and promotion.

It was desired that he should leave as soon as possible, and the Council thereupon agreed to release Mr. Swinden in February.

On behalf of the Council, Mr. A. A. GARRARD, the president, warmly congratulated Mr. Swinden on having been selected to undertake this important task for the Government, and on the recognition of his high abilities which it implied. All who knew him were confident that he would acquit himself with distinction and credit. NALGO would sorely miss him, and the skill, knowledge, courtesy, and equability of temperament he had always brought to its service.

Mr. J. SIMONDS, general secretary, associating himself with this tribute on behalf of the Association's staff, said that he had always received great help from Mr. Swinden, and it would be impossible to find a more loyal and wholehearted colleague. He was a lovable character who radiated good will throughout the staff.

Replying, Mr. Swinden thanked the Council and the staff for the many kindnesses he had received at their hands.

Booklet on NALGO's Exhibition—The Council approved a proposal to prepare a 72-page booklet, for sale to the public, based on the photographs collected for the NALGO exhibition and providing both a guide to the exhibition and a popular and interesting outline of local government. It is hoped to have the booklet ready by the time the exhibition is publicly shown.

Campaign to Educate New Voters—The public relations committee pointed out that at the next municipal elections in November more than ten million men and women would have the opportunity of casting a municipal vote for the first time in their lives, and suggested that NALGO's public relations resources during the coming months should be largely devoted to a planned and sustained campaign to educate these new voters in the opportunities and responsibilities of their enfranchisement. It was suggested that the co-operation of branches, newspapers, the B.B.C., the Ministry of Information, and other organisations should be sought in prosecuting this campaign, on the clear understanding, of course, that it would be entirely factual and objective, avoiding political partisanship in any form. The proposal was approved in principle and detailed plans are now being worked out.

Officers Transferred under the Education Act—It was agreed that those officers employed by district education authorities who, under the Education Act, will be transferred to the employ of the county council for the area, although subject to the control of the new divisional executives, should remain attached to the branches of which they are now members for the financial year ending October 31, 1945. In the meantime, the service conditions sub-committee is to consider whether the position of such officers calls for any amendment of the Association's rule determining to which branch a member should be attached.

Forces Training Schemes—In response to representations by NALGO, the Admiralty, War Office, and Air Ministry have given an assurance that lectures in citizenship, including local government, are to be given prominence in the training schemes for men and women returning from the Forces to civil life, and that, where the demand justifies it, consideration will be given to the provision of special lectures for local government officers and others wishing to prepare for local government examinations. Local government and allied subjects are to be included in correspondence courses arranged by the War Office and available to men and women in all three Services.

Municipal Staff College—Invited by the NALGO Consultative Committee to consider the desirability of a Municipal Staff College, the education committee reported that, while it was in sympathy with the objects of such a college, it felt that those objects could be better attained through existing educational institutions. Local education authorities now had wide powers for the provision of adult education, and it was their duty to give facilities wherever a demand for them arose. Further, the committee felt that men and women discharged from the Forces would prefer to continue their training at home rather than in an institution, with a continuance of communal life, possibly away from their homes. Finance, also, would create a difficult problem for a staff college.

Legislative Changes—In response to a suggestion that NALGO should prepare a series of handbooks of changes in local government since the outbreak of war, for the benefit of those returning from the Forces, the education committee is to prepare a summary of legislation permanently affecting local government, passed since 1939, with references to enable those interested to study any particular Act more closely. A summary of all wartime enactments would be too big a task to undertake today.

Training in Social Service—Mr. H. Slater, Principal Assistant, Education, is to represent the Association on a joint consultative committee set up by the National Council of Social Service to consider training for the social services.

Area Education Committees—Each area education committee is to be asked to submit reports on its work, for circulation to other area education committees.

NALGO Testimonial Fund—The national fund collected in 1943 as a testimonial to Mr. L. Hill, former general secretary of NALGO, now stands at £1,515, and Mr. Hill has suggested that it be devoted to fostering the Association's educational work. On the recommendation of the education committee, the Council agreed to use the money to launch a NALGO Testimonial Fund from which will be offered annually

A prize to the value of 25 guineas, open to all present or former local government officers, for the best published work on local government during the year; and

Two prizes of books to the value of seven guineas each for the best students in the Diploma in Public Administration courses at London and Liverpool Universities.

NALGO Correspondence Institute—As the result of a review of the work of the NALGO Correspondence Institute, courses are being revised and a new prospectus will be ready soon. Fees will be increased slightly to meet higher costs, but discount of 10 per cent will be allowed to NALGO members. Fees will still generally be lower than those of other coaching institutions.

Post-Entry Training—The Council accepted a comprehensive report on post-entry training prepared by the Metropolitan area education committee and decided to bring it to the notice of the National Whitley Council. This recommended the provision, throughout the country, of a number of centres at which local government officers would be given intensive courses in administrative methods, the practical working of different departments, and guidance on qualifications.

Local authorities would be asked to assist these centres both financially and by giving their officers leave with full pay to attend, either as students or as lecturers.

It is intended that this scheme should be developed along the lines of present Association policy, coincidentally with carrying out of the Hadow Committee recommendations, extension of existing educational facilities, and closer co-operation with Universities and other educational institutions and the professional and technical societies.

For demobilised local government officers, the report recommends refresher courses, by arrangement with local authorities.

Provident Society and "Temporaries"—Hitherto it has been necessary for every temporary local government officer applying for membership of the NALGO Provident Society to undergo a medical examination. The committee has now decided that, in future, temporary officers shall be asked to undergo a medical examination only if the society's medical referee considers it necessary.

Hospital and Nursing Home Scheme—The rules of the Provident Society's hospital and nursing home scheme restrict payment of claims in respect of any one illness to a period of 24 months. This limitation has caused much hardship and the committee has therefore decided to submit to the next annual general meeting an amendment of Rule 15 (5) which will have the effect of allowing claims up to the maximum of £50 for any one illness, irrespective of the period between the beginning of the illness and the date when the maximum amount claimable is reached.

Compensation for Planning Officers—In response to representations by NALGO, the Minister of Town and Country Planning has agreed that any local government officers who might suffer direct pecuniary loss by determination of appointment or diminution of emoluments as a result of the operation of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1944, will be covered in respect of compensation under Section 51 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1932.

South Coast Holiday Camp Rejected—A proposal submitted by the special activities committee to buy an existing holiday camp on the South Coast was rejected.

Mr. E. A. S. Young (chairman) presided, and those present included Messrs. E. L. Riley (vice-chairman), R. Adams, H. Allen, F. Bainbridge, W. R. Beevers, G. T. Belton, L. Bevan, N. W. Bingham, H. Blizard, A. G. Bolton, E. M. Bourne, S. H. Brodie, J. Brown, R. D. Brown, J. Chaston, A. Clark, E. R. Davies, Miss E. Dawson, Messrs. W. O. Dodd, J. W. Edmonds, J. Y. Fawcett, A. A. Garrard, D. L. Griffiths, F. H. Harrod, P. H. Harrold, R. E. Heron, S. A. Hughes, H. W. John, H. R. Jones, G. Llewelyn, F. R. Mann, C. J. Newman, T. Nolan, A. E. Nortrop, A. E. Odell, A. Denton-Ogden, D. J. Parry, J. Pepper, G. W. Phillips, A. Pinches, W. Pitt-Steele, C. A. W. Roberts, W. Rowlands, Miss I. Stansfield, Messrs. L. C. St. Leger Yeend, F. Sharpe, T. Spence, W. Strother, H. Taylor, L. H. Taylor, J. H. Tyrrell, J. S. Underwood, W. E. Veasey, J. H. Warren, S. Whitehead and J. Young.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR CONFERENCE

March 1—Notices of Motion from branches and district committees and names and addresses of conference delegates to be received at Headquarters by 5 p.m.

Nominations for election to the National Executive Council to be received by the appropriate district officer by 5 p.m.

April 1—Publication of "Local Government Service" containing the preliminary agenda and despatch of annual report of the National Executive Council to conference delegates.

April 8—Voting papers for the elections of honorary officers and the N.E.C. to be sent to branches.

April 15—Amendments to notices of motion on the preliminary agenda to be received at Headquarters by 5 p.m.

May 1—Publication of "Local Government Service" containing amendments to notices of motion.

May 8—Voting papers for the elections of honorary officers and the N.E.C. to be received by the district officer by 5 p.m.

May 28—Final Conference agenda to be sent to representatives. Last date for notification of division of voting strength.

June 11—Meeting of Public Relations Correspondents and Education Correspondents.

June 12-14—Conference at Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

June 15—Annual meetings of ancillaries (NALGO Provident Society; Approved Society; NALGO Building Society; Logomia).

TWO NEW MEMBERS OF THE N.E.C.

E. M. Bourne and F. R. Mann

THE Yorkshire district committee has nominated two new members to the National Executive Council, in place of H. Norton and D. J. Osborne, who resigned recently on obtaining other appointments outside the district. The new members are:

E. M. Bourne, A.S.A.A., assistant accountant, Kingston-upon-Hull. A member of his branch executive for fifteen years, Mr. Bourne has served as vice-chairman (1938-40), chairman (1940-43) and a staff representative on the local joint committee since 1937. He has been a member of

F. R. MANN

E. M. BOURNE

the district committee for many years, has sat on its executive since 1941, and is a member of the provincial council and of its appeals committee.

F. R. Mann, divisional officer for education, West Riding C.C. Mr. Mann, who has served in the education department of the county council since 1913, was elected to the branch executive in 1922, appointed branch secretary from 1928 to 1931, branch chairman from 1938 to 1941, and branch secretary again in 1942, a post he still holds. He has been a member of the staff side of the local joint committee since its inception and, apart from short breaks, of the district committee since 1928. He is at present a member of the district executive committee and of the staff side of the provincial council.

You May Volunteer for Relief Work—If Your Council Will Release You

MANY members of NALGO have written to Headquarters during recent months inquiring into the possibility of undertaking relief work abroad either during or after the war, but in the absence of any official scheme for recruiting local government officers for this work it has not been possible to give them much helpful advice. Now, however, the Ministry of Health has issued a circular to all local authorities on the subject (circular 1/45, dated January 3, 1945) of which the following are the salient passages:

1. I am directed by the Minister of Health to say that he has been asked to invite local authorities to bring to the notice of their staffs the position with regard to volunteering for relief work abroad. Staff for this purpose is recruited both by the United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Administration, for administrative and specialist appointments; and by certain voluntary societies, whose activities are co-ordinated by the Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad, for executive work in the field . . .

It is fully realised that local authorities can spare few persons; that already they have serious difficulty in carrying on their work with the reduced staff at their disposal; and that further calls on their staff are being made by preparations (which cannot be delayed) for schemes of housing and water supply, and for other post-war developments. It is right, however, to give officers and servants of local authorities who are anxious to volunteer a chance of doing so, where they can be replaced in their present duties, and subject to the operation of any general system of quotas which it may be found necessary to establish. It has, therefore, been arranged that applications of volunteers from the local government service for posts under the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration shall be accepted by the Appointments Offices of the Ministry of Labour and National Service, if an applicant produces a statement that the local authority which employs him is aware of the proposal to volunteer and has given preliminary assent. This preliminary assent will not bind the local authority to release the applicant, and that authority will be consulted again before an employee is actually engaged for relief work.

2. The voluntary societies concerned with executive work in the field do not normally offer regular salaried appointments, but engage volunteers as calls for work are made on the societies, and draw primarily upon persons already known to them . . . A member of a local authority's staff may be considered by a voluntary society for relief work abroad, if he can produce a statement that the local authority is aware of the proposal to volunteer and has given its preliminary assent; but this preliminary assent does not commit the local authority to the release of the volunteer . . .

3. The Minister hopes that persons wishing to volunteer will not be unnecessarily discouraged, but he feels bound to remind local authorities that the needs of public health and other vital services in our own country must not be overlooked. Where the number of officers of first importance for the maintenance of such services . . has already been so reduced as to remove any margin of safety, permission to volunteer for work abroad should not be given . . .

5. It is intended that as far as possible persons undertaking relief work shall be in the same position as persons now on "war service" which has been recognised as such by the Minister for purposes of the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act, 1939; and the Minister of Health hereby recognises as "war service" for purposes of that Act (*a*) any employment by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration which may be undertaken by an employee of a local authority with the concurrence of that authority, and (*b*) any employment by a voluntary society on relief work abroad which may be undertaken by an employee of a local authority with the concurrence of that authority and in accordance with arrangements made by the Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad . . . [and] . . . any employment to which a person engaged in "war service" as defined in that Act is transferred by the Minister of Labour and National Service.

From the above it will be seen that a local government officer wishing to volunteer for relief work must first apply to his local authority for preliminary assent to his release. Having obtained that, he may then apply for an appointment on relief work, either to the nearest appointments office of the Ministry of Labour, or to the Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad, 75, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

DO YOU RENT YOUR HOUSE?

Members able to buy the house they are now renting are strongly recommended to do so. They will save money and will avoid the inconvenience and expense of moving.

The Nalgo Building Society makes 90 per cent advances at 4½ per cent repayable over 20 years. For a £500 advance, the monthly repayment is £3 4s. 2d., and pro rata for larger amounts.

Ask your branch secretary or write to Headquarters for details.

While the circular makes it clear that relief work will be recognised as war service, it leaves two important matters affecting every permanent local government officer unsettled—namely, reinstatement and superannuation. On these NALGO offers the following advice:

1. **Reinstatement**—An officer wishing to volunteer for relief work should, when applying to his local authority, for assent to his release, ask the local authority to agree to reinstate him at the end of his period of employment on relief work.

2. **Superannuation**—Under the local Government Staffs (War Service) Act, 1939, an officer's superannuation rights are preserved so long as he is engaged on war service. But the Act defines "war service" as "service during the period of the present emergency." The "present emergency" will continue until such time as the King, by Order in Council, declares it to be at an end. The recognition of relief work as war service will, therefore, fully protect the superannuation rights of a local government officer engaged in it so long as the "present emergency" lasts—but only so long. Should his work on relief continue after the "period of the present emergency" has ended—as seems quite possible—he may lose his superannuation rights.

In these circumstances an officer wishing to volunteer for relief work is advised to ask that the terms of his employment shall contain a condition entitling him to relinquish his appointment and return to the service of his local authority immediately the "period of the present emergency" expires.

Finsbury Appeal Underlines Need for Security of Tenure

THE need for greater security of tenure for chief officers of local authorities, and for better protection for them than exists today against improper pressure by councillors, was forcefully demonstrated in an appeal heard by the Divisional Court recently.

The appeal was brought by Alderman Harold Riley, Mayor of Finsbury, and Mr. J. E. Arnold James, former town clerk of Finsbury, against a surcharge of £1,024 made jointly upon them by the district auditor.

The facts, as brought out in the judgment, were that, early in 1939, Finsbury borough council, of which Alderman Riley—described by Mr. Justice Cassels as "a dominating personality"—was leader of the majority group, wished to provide deep air raid shelters. Its first scheme, estimated to cost £1,388,860, was rejected by the Lord Privy Seal, whereupon the council approved a modified scheme, estimated to cost £86,399. This modified scheme was condemned by the London County Council and rejected by the Home Office, and the Ministry of Health refused to sanction a loan in respect of it. Ald. Riley, determined that the scheme should be carried out notwithstanding the refusal of a loan, initiated negotiations with a finance company, and sought counsel's opinion on the legality of such a course. Counsel advised that the course proposed was legal, but suggested that, in view of the adverse opinion of Home Office experts, an independent expert report should be obtained.

In the meantime, to satisfy the finance company that the council was acting within its powers, a collusive action was arranged, and a relief playground attendant—"a tool chosen by Riley"—was put up to claim an injunction to stay the scheme. At the hearing of the action, Mr. Justice Simonds upheld the right of the council to build the shelter at its own expense. The council was not told that this action was pending, nor that it was a collusive action, and the costs, totalling £249 10s. 3d. were paid by the finance company and formed part of the capital cost of the scheme.

Satisfied as a result of this action that the council had power to proceed, the finance company approved an agreement to finance the construction of the shelter. This agreement provided for payment of half of the architects', engineers', and legal fees—totalling £12,400—as soon as the building contract had been exchanged, and for repayment of the balance of the cost over a period of 38 years, and included a clause empowering the company to suspend all work should war break out. It was due to come before the council for ratification on August 1, 1939.

The report of the independent expert, Professor Collins, received on July 27, 1939, amounted to a severe condemnation of the scheme on technical grounds. Mr. James pointed out to Alderman Riley that submission of "such a devastating and scathing report" to the council would mean the abandonment of the whole scheme, and that it was his duty to disclose it. Alderman Riley replied that the council must not see the report and that if Mr. James disclosed it, he would be dismissed.

When the scheme came before the council on August 1, no mention was made of the expert's report, nor of the details of the agreement with the finance company. The council approved the agreement.

Work was begun on the shelter, but on September 6, three days after the outbreak of war, the finance company suspended it, in accordance with the "war clause" in the agreement. The council was thus left without any shelter, but with a liability for more than £10,000 in costs and fees and for interest payments for 38 years.

At an extraordinary audit which concluded in 1944, the district auditor found that this loss to the funds of the council had been incurred by the negligence and misconduct of Alderman Riley and Mr. James, and surcharged them jointly the sum of £1,024, representing the costs of the collusive action and interest charges incurred up to August 14, 1943. They appealed to the Divisional Court against the surcharge.

Dismissing the appeal, the Lord Chief Justice, Mr. Justice Atkinson, and Mr. Justice Cassels, severely criticised the administration of Finsbury, and referred at length to the duties owed by a town clerk towards the ratepayers as well as towards his council. On the latter point, the Lord Chief Justice said: "The office of town clerk is an important part of the machinery of local government. *He may be said to stand between the borough council and the ratepayers.* He is there to assist by his advice and action the conduct of public affairs in the borough, and if there is a disposition on the part of the council, still more on the part of any member of the council, to ride roughshod over his opinions, the question must at once arise as to whether it is not his duty forthwith to resign his office or, at any rate, to do what he thinks right and await the consequences. This is not so dangerous or heroic a course as it may seem. The integrity of the administration of public affairs is such that publicity may be safely relied upon to secure protection for anyone in the position in which the town clerk was said to have been placed."

Mr. Justice Atkinson observed: "Mr. James admits the withholding of the Collins report from the council, but he claims that it was done under duress of threats of dismissal. Riley could not dismiss him and a dismissal by the council for telling them of such a vital document is really unthinkable."

Leave to appeal was granted to each of the appellants.

Uncivil Defence—by "Haywire"

"MR. HAYWIRE," piped Miss Podge, infant factotum of the rates office, Doodleham, "you asked me to remind you of your duty in the Control Room to-night."

"Miss Podge," I replied with feeling, "you think of everything—good or bad. I suppose you couldn't by any chance think of some other innocent lamb who might perform my weekly penance for me?"

"I could *think* of someone," the infant prodigy murmured, gazing prettily up at the ceiling. "My brother might do it for you, only——"

"Only what?" I encouraged her in a moment of hope. "Only he's in India," she laughed.

Hey! this kid is getting a bit too brilliant. I must remember to dim her a little. But only gently, mind; for she is like a young mother to me and—— The 'phone-bell interrupted my ruminations.

"It's Mr. Hack, speaking from the Control Room," announced the child-wonder. "He says, 'Is the Control Room to be brought up to you or will you go down to it?'"

Mr. Hack is our deputy borough treasurer, and is always prowling around the Control Room inspecting rotas and kindly reminding others of their times of duty. For no good reason he seems to have appointed himself as officer-in-charge of officers-in-charge and all other officers in Doodleham's civil defence service.

"Hm! Tell him," I faltered, trying, in vain, to think up a shattering riposte, "tell him—er—not to incommode himself; that I will come down in the fullness of time—*my* time." The bright child, bless her, passed on the message verbatim.

In due course I struggled from my desk with a sigh, smiled a good-night to Miss Podge and left her chewing pensively at a pen-holder. (She must eat at least two in the course of a week—unless, which is rare, they are made of bone. These seem to take her longer to consume.)

At the end of the corridor I descended the stone steps that burrowed into the bowels of the Town Hall, continued along a passage, and reached the Control Room, nerve centre of Doodleham's civil defence.

As officer-in-charge, I was granted a "Good evening, sir," from the messenger dozing in a deck-chair by the door. I turned towards the telephone room. This chamber I always enter with a humble and contrite heart; for here I am not even taken for granted. For a reason known only to their silent selves, these get-thee-behind-me telephonists, recruited from the staff—no different from me—appear to consider an officer-in-charge as an enemy of society in general and telephonists in particular. Had I the courage I would tell them of their undeserved good fortune in having a man of my warm nature as their O/C. After all, I am as good as they, though I cannot knit, read, talk, eat, and manicure my nails all at the same time. So I set my teeth and stepped into the witches' cave.

Yes, there they were, all eight of them, knitting and reading their hearts out. Not a stitch was dropped nor an eyeball turned as their O/C stood in their midst. Nevertheless, "Good evening all," I greeted, just to give them the chance of being charitable. One, only one, of their society, a very young member indeed, and obviously only half-trained, took advantage of my kindness and whispered a shy "Good evening" to her feet. Whereon seven pairs of astonished eyes left their knitting and reading to gaze at the traitor. That child, I reflected, has booked herself a long, tart talk from the dreaded Miss Frorst, message supervisor of this shift, now crouched in a chair a yard or so apart from her charges, ready to spring to their defence should any presumptious O/C dare to fraternise with them. Half-way down her nose perched a pair of steel-rimmed spectacles.

Then my eye caught sight of the attendance register; thinking to give the tableau a little life, I glanced at it. That, of course, was the last thing an O/C, however bold, should do. I could sense eight minds with but a single thought—He's checking up on us! Frorst whipped off her spectacles and withered me with a Why-can't-you-mind-your-own-business sort of look. So I retired to the Control Room proper.

Dropping wearily to a chair by my table, I started an attempt to decipher the latest batch of circulars. After twenty minutes, I gave it up. Either I needed a holiday, or their writers did. Give me "Pilgrim's Progress," every time. I can understand John Bunyon, though he does not always seem to understand me. But these never-the-less-and-notwithstanding fellows merely leave my mind in a state of confusion confounded.

So I sought solace by letting my eye wander around the room. In so doing, it lighted on the daily orders book lying open on the table next to mine. Hang it! Look at that entry under to-day's heading! "Paper Exercise, 19.30 hours. To be arranged by O/C." Now I should, indeed, be popular.

Why must it always be my lot to pass on unpleasant instructions? I would far rather had told the shift they could all go gathering nuts and may. But duty must be done, so I gathered my courage and marched into the telephone room to pass on the grim tidings. As one, eight heads jerked up from their knitting and reading.

"An exercise!—at this juncture?" snapped sergeant Frorst, their spokeswoman. "'Fraid so," I sighed, as sixteen eyes stabbed at me. "Very well!" Miss Frorst rasped, twitching her nose in disgust. "I presume you will want four incidents sent in, one from each depot?" "Your presumption is quite correct, Miss Frorst," I replied as haughtily as I dared.

Then I retired to the Control Room. For, whatever the faults of Miss Frorst, dalliance was not one of them, and I could be sure that her pack would soon be in full cry. And it was! O, indeed, it was! Phone-bells started ringing and reports came pouring in from all the depots: express reports, main reports, supplementary reports; reports of pubs hit, churches demolished, and wholesale carnage all over Doodleham. Paper everywhere. Forms flashing from hand to hand; blue forms; red forms; black forms. A terrifying storm of forms.

Like a mad thing I marked form after form with the appropriate action to be taken, getting hotter every minute. Off went my coat. On went a cigarette. On went another cigarette and out went the forms. In came more. Out they went and I all but went with them. My patience was ebbing fast. I looked around for comfort. And I found it. There was Frorst, standing amid the tumult, calm and cold, like an iceberg steepling up from a storm-tossed sea.

I re-doubled my efforts. "Inform police." "Inform fire brigade." "Inform water board." Never was so much information dispensed to so many by so few.

But all misery ends some time. The storm abated. Paper ceased to fall, and all the air a solemn stillness held, save for the click-a-click-click of knitting needles and the flap of printed pages as the shift settled down again to the serious business of the evening. My anguish had passed and life was beginning to take on a dream-like quality when, alas! heavy footsteps that I knew too well disturbed my Oneness With The Infinite.

T. H. Law, the Man At The Helm, the Controller himself, stamped into the room. He could not, of course, stay at home like a good husband, but needs must pop in and out of the Control Room every evening—and he always looked around as if surprised to see it still inhabited.

"Good evening, Haywire," the Great Man greeted, but looking beyond me as if to imply that it did not matter whether I was there or not. "Any trouble?"

"Only an exercise, sir," I sighed, as a martyr might casually mention an afternoon on the rack.

"Exercise!" he sniffed, training his legal eye on me. "What nonsense are you talking about? No exercises have been scheduled for this week."

At this remark, eight pairs of eyes looked up. "The daily orders book, sir, it's in there," I answered, thinking my defence was sure.

"Let me see it," he snapped. I laid the book before him. He inspected it for a moment, then looked at me in the manner of a judge about to pass sentence.

"Mr. Haywire," the legal voice thundered, "are you aware that we are now in the year of grace one thousand nine hundred and forty-five?" Only too well was I aware of it. I was already sick to death of it, since it was no better than the preceding six. As a gesture that I was willing to co-operate, however, I glanced down at the book. O, woe, woe, woe! From the top of the page the date stared back at me—1943! Some enthusiast had been doing a little research work and left the accursed volume lying open on the table for an innocent like me.

The Great Man turned and left, with the look of a man whose life is spent among those who are never quite sane. I also left, hard on his heels, before Frorst got to work on me.

AT RANDOM

By "Hyperion"

Civilization originates when men becom inspired by a strong and clear determination t attain progress, and consecrate themselves to th service of life and of the world.—*Albert Schweitze*

Smith Minor Again

Dante and Beatrice were not married. Th was, however, pre-eminently All Right.

When one reflects that Dante was of Lati blood, undeniably a wop and dago, it redoune the more redundantly to his credit that he neve laid a finger on Beatrice, never made a fresh c any remark, or even winked. In fact, so pure w the whole affair that they never met up sociall until she was dead.—*From a schoolboy's essay.*

Puzzle Corner

Can anyone tell me why my mother-in-law ge red streaks under her tongue? As she talks, yo can see bright red flashes. Sometimes it's pu and then it will redden up again. Is this an acc condition do you think?—Boston Globe.

No. It's more likely that she ate an electri eel.

Not What You Think

TAB ENDS AND FENTS FOR WIPING RAG MERCHANTS.

This headline in the "Board of Trade Journal" has nothing to do with the scarcity of towels.

Local Government Postbag

Dear Sir,—I have been informed by my wife that she will shortly be entering the Hospital fo a period of about a week. I am given to unde stand, that amongst the things she will be re quired to bring in with her are two nightdresse Owing to the fact that my wife does not posses either these or pyjamas also as finance will no allow for the purchase of same, I am wonderin if it would be possible for her to borrow th Hospital's. I would further like to mention m wife is outsize. Otherwise we might have trie friends or relatives. If this could be arranged great weight would be taken off our mind Thanking you, I beg to remain, Yours Respect fully ——.

Foreboding

When one of his sons died at the age of sixty five, the Yorkshire nonagenarian remarked wistfully "I always knew I'd never rear that lad!"

Apt

The bridegroom was accompanied by Mr. Joh Mumford, and as they entered the church Mis Rogers, who was at the organ, played brida music, which at the bridegroom's request wa interspersed with strains of "Rescue the Perish ing."—*The Scillonian.*

Delhi Delight

Enter Their Excellencies. . . . In front o them stalks an A.D.C. Always during their term of office, the A.D.C. must precede them. On irrepressible ex-Vicereine once told me that afte a few years she began to feel that she could no get into the bath unless an A.D.C. had jumped i first.—*Beverley Nichols in "Verdict on India."*

Fairy Story

Once upon a time there was a bombed-out famil who insisted that all the officials at the local tow hall were born in wedlock.

He Knew Best

"See here," said the missionary to the Africa chief, "it is wrong to have more than one wife Tell all your wives except one that they can n longer look upon you as their husband."

After a moment's reflection, the chief replied "You tell them!"

Merry England

Help to win the peace by selling your vacant blitzed property to a speculator, who will pa cash.—*Advert in Portsmouth Evening News.*

Black Market Please Copy

Wanted, large mincing machine . . . any un reasonable price considered. —Advt. in *The Times*

Another Impending Apology

Last Friday evening he gave the second lectur in a new series. His subject was "Public Nuis ances." There were about eight present.

—*Weekly Paper.*

Is NALGO Ready to Help in Shaping Better Britain?

READING LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE during 1944, one could be excused for believing that the Association had at last emerged from the backwoods of isolationism into the open plain of constructive participation in building our better Britain. Skimming through the past twelve months' journals, one comes across such matters as Social Security, National Health Service, Land Reform, Town and Country Planning, etc., yet the President's New Year Message, contains no reference to these important social issues. The statement that the Association is "more determined to rise to the full height of its influence" might perhaps be held to cover these points, but omission of any mention of affiliation to the T.U.C. raises doubts whether it was so intended.

Assuming that rising to the full height of our influence means that we do intend to play a positive part in shaping the future of Britain, we must ask how serious this statement can be when it seems that we intend to play our part without considering our relationship, in general, to all those people who are working towards the same goal and, in particular, to that large majority organised under the leadership of the T.U.C.

On the other hand, can it be that the journal in 1944 was rather too progressive for the N.E.C. and that those who favour the raising of NALGO activity from the negative level of economic bargaining to positive participation at the "statesmanship" level, have had their knuckles rapped in the same way as our would-be "reconstructionists"? This assumption is possible when it is realised that nowhere in his message did the President expressly deal with any subject other than domestic policy. No one could find fault with his measures for strengthening the power and influence of the Association, outstanding among which are the splendid progress made in building and extending the scope and influence of the Whitley Council and, every bit as important, the ambitious and confident plans for developing public relations. This is no grudging acknowledgment. It is a sincere appreciation of work well done, of plans well laid, and of a leadership alive, not only to the needs of the Association but, also, to the needs of local government as a social service.

Having said that, however, it is not easy to forget that Conference in 1943 was persuaded to delay acceptance of the decisive ballot vote in favour of affiliation on the basis of a similar statement. Can it be that this emphasis on domestic policy to the exclusion of our relations with other organisations and our tasks as part of the democratic state, is but a reflection of current N.E.C. tactics and an initial preparation for its case against affiliation? No one, of course, would expect the President to express a point of view on this controversial issue, but the least one would have expected would have been a reference to it as a probable matter for decision in 1945.

Pending the decision of the 1945 Conference, would we have a statement from the N.E.C. of its case against affiliation, stating also any new facts and arguments which have come to light since its decision against was taken in January, 1944? A full and frank discussion in your columns would ensure that Conference could register its decision in an atmosphere free from "tactics" etc.—but perhaps that is being too naive?

Glasgow. NEIL C. McLEAN.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE OFFICERS
Risk of Losing Compensation

AS Mr. Dodd showed in his article in the November journal, NALGO has taken its position in the vanguard of the movement for progress in the administration of our social services, by placing its knowledge and experience at the disposal of the Beveridge Committee, and by giving first place amongst its other activities to that advisory function.

In the face of this altruistic action, it is surprising that no reference to the compensation of officers who might be injuriously affected has appeared in the White Paper on national insurance. The passages relating thereto in the Beveridge Report will be poor consolation to those who feel sceptical of the likelihood of their transfer to the Ministry of National Insurance, in view of the potential competition from 81,000 insurance officials similarly affected, to say nothing of the limitations imposed upon recruitment to the civil service by the age bar and other technicalities.

Experience in the past ten years has shown that the transfer of functions from local to central administration has not resulted in the transfer of by any means all the officers engaged in that work by local authorities. It seems probable, therefore, that the majority of existing officers will not be transferred. That majority will consist largely of men of mature age, at a most useful stage in their careers, but likely to find themselves occupying positions of gradually diminishing usefulness, with a decreasing chance of obtaining alternative employment.

Such officers may retain the sympathy of their employing authorities, with the result that the authorities will not, for some years, either dispense with their services, or even cause them to suffer "direct pecuniary loss"; thus unwittingly depriving them of the right to claim compensation under the provisions of any compensation provisions for which we yet have a precedent.

Furthermore, as a result of the piecemeal method of legislation which is inevitable, there can be no single datum-line from which an officer can decide whether he is to be transferred or not; only a series of "appointed days" separated by intervals determined by the phrase "as opportunity serves." Here, surely, is a "staggering" prospect which can only aggravate the condition of existing employees, and make compensation a matter to them of life and death. NALGO's intervention on their behalf becomes a question of paramount importance.

The proposals submitted by the Association to and adopted by the Local Government Advisory Committee of the T.U.C., and which were later submitted direct to Sir William Beveridge, were based on the premise that an employee would either

(*a*) suffer direct pecuniary loss, relinquish office, and be compensated in accordance with the principles contained in the 4th Schedule to the Local Government Act, 1933, or

(*b*) be transferred to the Ministry with attendant safeguards as to tenure, etc.

No such circumstances as have been indicated above were, apparently, envisaged.

The most recent compensation clauses, those in the Old Age and Widows' Pensions Act, 1940, cover the two distinct cases of

(*a*) existing officers whose appointments are determined within five years from the appointed day because their services are not required or their duties diminished; and

(*b*) existing officers who relinquish office by reason of their having to perform duties which are not analogous to, or which are an unreasonable addition to, those they were required to perform immediately before the appointed day.

Officers whose appointments are *not* determined, and who *cannot* relinquish office on the grounds of performing non-analogous or unreasonably-increased duties, simply because their new duties are "analogous" in a qualitative but not in a quantitative sense of that word, are ignored.

I suggest that a clause on the following lines would meet the situation:

"An existing officer who at any time within five years after the appointed day relinquishes office by reason of his having been required to perform duties which are not analogous to, or which represent such a diminution of responsibilities or duties as would, in the opinion of the Minister of Health, be likely to affect injuriously the vocational prospects of the officer if performed for a period of not less than five years; or which are an unreasonable addition to those which he was required to perform immediately before that date, shall be deemed for the purposes of the Act to have had his office determined in consequence of the Act, and to have suffered direct pecuniary loss in consequence of the Act by reason of such determination."

If the principle were accepted, the final decision would still rest with the Ministry in any contentious case, and the general effect would be a more complete protection for faithful employees who have had the misfortune to "fall between two stools," without necessarily increasing the cost to the community of compensation as a whole; for, in practice, I think it would be found that an employee affected would generally be satisfied with the establishment of his right to compensation at the time of the first diminution of duties, coupled with a suspension of payment of compensation such as would be provided for in a compensation code similar to that contained in the 4th Schedule to the Local Government Act, 1933, so long as the "diminished appointment" were retained. If at any time it were subsequently terminated by either party, the suspended compensation would become payable immediately.

I believe that it is in the vital interests of every NALGO member that some such principle should be established at the earliest possible moment, and it seems clear that the Association now has every moral right to press for its recognition with all speed.

Grimsby. E. HORSMAN,

READERS' FORUM

Once again, many letters have been held over owing to lack of space. It is more necessary than ever that correspondents should be brief. Letters for the March journal must reach the editor, 27, Abingdon Street, London, S.W.1., by February 15.

Re-grading Needed Now

I WRITE to support those correspondents who have expressed deep concern about the position of public assistance staffs in the proposed reorganised social services.

The general problem of ensuring either transfer to the new government department, or adequate compensation is, I feel, generally understood inside NALGO, though not well recognised outside local government circles. I attended the Parliamentary debates on the White Paper and heard several members refer to the moral obligation to provide for displaced insurance agents, but not one reference to local government officers. When I spoke to a few M.P.s afterwards, I found them unaware that local government staffs would be affected. Is NALGO as good at lobbying as the insurance companies and their agents?

W. G. David touched on another aspect of the problem in the December journal, when he urged that "representations should be made to the local authorities' organisations on their moral obligation to promote and secure for their outgoing staff equality of opportunity in the new service."

Since 1934, the public assistance service has sustained at least four dismemberments—in 1934, 1936, 1940, and 1944, and now it is doomed to complete disintegration in 1945-46(?). Those of its staffs who have remained have suffered all the indignities and injustices of a mortally attacked section of the community. Prospects in the Assistance Board have been bright and will be brighter as its scope grows. There must be many well-qualified officers in the public assistance service who, because of lack of promotion opportunities during recent years, are receiving very meagre salaries (not 30 vacancies for relieving officers have been advertised since the war began, compared with about 6-8 weekly for sanitary inspectors). Are they to be offered jobs in corresponding grades in the Assistance Board in the belief that this will satisfy the claims of justice? I myself possess the appropriate certificate in Poor Law and the D.P.A. of London University, yet my salary is lower than the weekly assistance I pay out to several applicants for relief.

I hope the N.E.C. will recognise the need to impress on local authorities now their moral obligation to revise the salaries of their public assistance staffs in order to compensate them for lack of promotion opportunities in the past and to ensure them fair opportunities in the new service.

The announcement that 15 per cent of the vacancies in the post-war civil service will be ear-marked for temporary war-time civil servants is a danger signal for NALGO to heed.

I have naturally assumed that the position of staffs in the Forces will be especially taken into consideration.

"D. P. A."

CENTRAL BUYING
Essential for all Local Authorities

MR. BOSWELL KING'S article on central buying in the January journal raises a matter which should interest all local authorities, since, political views notwithstanding, it is in the ratepayers' interest that each authority should buy its supplies at the most economical rates.

I believe that the only county councils which have yet set up supplies depts., comprising offices, warehouses, production plants and delivery transport vehicles, are those of London, the West Riding, and Kent, and it may be assumed that each of these is satisfied that its undertaking is a paying

proposition. Why, then, is the system not adopted by more local authorities?

Whilst it may be a matter of opinion whether the overheads of these undertakings are good economics, every local authority could with advantage organise its purchases by appointing a qualified and competent purchasing officer. Such an officer is, to my mind, as necessary as a treasurer or librarian. By his intimate trade knowledge and buying abilities, he could save his authority the cost of his salary many times over.

With some authorities the purchase of supplies and equipment is the responsibility of architects, surveyors, sanitary officers, and even chief clerks, none of whom is necessarily qualified for the task. Similarly, hospital stewards and masters of public assistance institutions buy their own supplies, often from several sources and at varying prices. These examples cry aloud for organised central purchasing, which would often result in a better article, or contract, at a cheaper price.

OBSERVER.

WARTIME APPOINTMENTS

Unfair to the Warriors

THE following recent happening shows how far we are to-day from that "Square Deal for Warriors" you are seeking.

An officer on the staff of my local authority was deferred from military service because he was "indispensable," and would be impossible to replace. Now he has applied for, and obtained, a better job with another local authority. His place here has been filled—quite easily—by another officer from another local authority, who also has improved his position. Both appointments are permanent.

What chance have the men in the Forces of getting a decent job when they return if, while they are away, all the good jobs are to be filled "permanently." This unfair system should be stopped immediately. The same thing is happening to-day as happened during the last war—the "stay-at-homes" are getting the pick of the jobs, and the "warriors" will be left with the leavings.

"TEMPORARY."

N A L G O heartily agrees, and is tackling this problem vigorously, as "Abingdon" records on page 276. But it can succeed only with the co-operation of individual members.

CONFERENCE DELEGATES

Enthusiasm the Test

THE letter from "All Change" in the January journal, will arouse some sympathy among members of branches which lack the courage to face real issues. But his plea that the privilege of attending Conference be spread among more members will be useless unless branches are prepared to appoint only those who are ready and able to put or defend a position, should the need arise.

The conditions enjoyed by local government officers today, although not ideal, have not been achieved by branches electing delegates on the basis of "it's your turn, Mr. So-and-So." No, the men who have raised us to a position of respectability, are those who have fought in N A L G O with "bread and butter," not attendance at Conference, constantly before them.

I grant that the complaint voiced by "All Change" does exist in some branches, but I am certain that I have offered the only remedy—the courage to reject the "holiday" delegate and elect the "bread and butter" delegate, no matter how often he may go.

"BREAD AND BUTTER."

NATIONAL SCALES NOW!

"Long Overdue"

IT was both surprising and encouraging to read in the "N A L G O Diary" in December that such publications as "The Observer" and "The Countryman" were taking an interest in better and national scales of salary for local government officers. Reform is long overdue, and our case must be stated in a loud voice, for we lag far behind any other section of the community.

Take my own case. I am almost 22, have spent nearly six years in the service, have for the past three been carrying out a responsible job undertaken in normal times by a man much older than myself, and am rewarded by the princely salary of £110, plus bonus. Another young man at 18 who had passed the school certificate (as I have done) would as an *uncertificated* teacher, earn £102 p.a., plus bonus, as a starting rate, while after two short years at a training college (you know, teaching is a *profession*, old boy) would *start* under the proposed new scales at £300 p.a.—more than the *maximum* of the clerical scale in force in this area, a maximum obtained after 15 years' continual service and devotion to duty and with little hope of promotion, even for those with extra ability, unless a sudden epidemic of bubonic plague should leave you the sole survivor.

I am continually hearing of Whiteleyism, provincial councils and such like, but their fruits never seem quite to ripen. National scales are needed at once! Were an agreement to be reached now, surely N A L G O could compel every local authority to accept it. When Burnham scales are approved for teachers, local authorities must pay them. There are national scales for agricultural workers, bricklayers, miners, engineers, etc.—but not for local government officers.

What about it, N A L G O? And what do other members say?

GRAND NATIONAL.

Nalgo Correspondence Institute

courses have been specially prepared for local government officers. The Institute is not concerned with profit; it exists to provide a service to those wishing to prepare for the following examinations:

- National Association of Local Government Officers.
- Incorporated Association of Rating and Valuation Officers.
- Board of Trade—Inspectors of Weights and Measures.
- Institution of Municipal and County Engineers—Testamur.
- Poor Law Examinations Board—Relieving Officers, Institution Officers, and Clerical Assistants.
- Royal Sanitary Institute—Sanitary Inspectors and Meat and Food Inspectors.
- College of Preceptors—Senior Certificate.

Courses for the Diploma in Public Administration have been specially prepared by University teachers and lecturers who give individual attention to each student.

A new prospectus is now ready and copies may be obtained from

The Nalgo Correspondence Institute, 24 Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

Stewards and Assistants

I UNDERSTAND that an endeavour is being made to secure a national scale of salaries for hospital stewards and assistants, a reform which is much overdue.

I am told that the salary of an assistant steward is to be based on 6/10ths of the steward's salary, and I submit that this is a ridiculously low figure. An assistant or deputy steward is expected to take the place of the steward at any time (such as holidays, sickness, etc.), and must therefore possess a degree of efficiency closely approaching (if not equalling) that of the steward, yet under the proposed new scale he is apparently considered worth only 6/10ths of the salary of the man for whom he deputises. An example of this scale shows that where a steward receives £600 per annum, his assistant would get only £360, which is preposterous.

I do not know who is responsible for drawing up this proposed scale—there does not appear to have been any attempt to contact the people concerned—but I trust that N A L G O will not agree to such a glaring anomaly.

"POOR ASSISTANT."

"Poor Assistant" is ahead of the facts. The National Whitley Council is now dealing with the salaries of masters and matrons of institutions, but has not yet reached those of stewards, and no proposals of any kind have been submitted to it.

DISTRICT COMMITTEES

Scotland's Lead

I WAS glad to read in the December journal, which has just reached me, your commendation of the Scottish District Committee for its publication of a news bulletin—an activity hitherto neglected by district committees. It is most desirable that district committees should publish their opinions and actions on district questions. Further, the development of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE into a popular journal will necessitate some pruning of articles of domestic interest only. The responsibility for circulation of local and domestic news can properly be undertaken by the district committee, and Scotland has given a good lead

A further natural development, arising fr the growth of the Association, would be transformation of district committees fr deliberative into active bodies. I do dist committee should be as active on its own leve organisation as are the N.E.C. and bra executives on theirs. In this matter, too, I h that Scotland will lead the way.

JOHN S. COVENTRY, Pte
(Glasgow Branch.)

HANDS THAT WON'T ROCK CRAD

Woman's Inherent Rights

THE "alarm" and "impatience" exhibi by Frank E. Knight over the "self cent aims expressed by unloved and unlovable milit feminists" must have caused many chuck when members read the January journal, an hope that most came from the women. W heat rashes these men bring themselves out when they contemplate the progress women making—progress to establish their inher right to be individuals and citizens, but a ri hitherto suppressed by men!

May I ask Mr. Knight why he and so many his male colleagues consider that being an app dage to man, with all the resultant disabilit should be woman's natural lot?

As an average woman in her middle thirt who, alas, has often been the object of the ador attention of men who have thought that my a in life was to rock their particular cradles, I h spent my time making it clear that, as a Social I am opposed to compulsory unpaid labour a a parasite class, and refuse to be a slave hou keeper or a kept woman.

May I ask, too, why accusations of frustrati repression, and inhibition are always hurled at married women, especially if they have worl hard and carved out a career for themselve Is it not time someone suggested that these tr are found in single men, and that men without experience of fatherhood are equally unenlig ened and unsympathetic?

London. GLEN GORDON

LAND REFORM

A Powerful Advocate

HERE is an interesting comment on your sta on land reform:

"The land monopoly is by far the greatest of monopolies; it is a perpetual monopoly, and i the mother of all forms of monopoly. T municipality wishing for broader streets, bet houses, more healthy, decent, scientific planned towns, is made to pay, and is made to p in exact proportion as it has exerted itself in past to make improvements. The more it i improved the town the more it has increased land value, the more it will have to pay for a land it may wish to acquire, and all the wh the land monopolist has only to sit still and wa complacently his property multiplying in val sometimes manifold, without either effort contribution on his part. And that is justice

So spoke Winston Churchill in 1908 in debates on land taxation! It is also no coin dence, surely, that Sir Waldron Smithers vo against the Government and for compensati on such terms as would cost £200 millions m if adopted to deal with redevelopment, and at the same time opposed "Beveridge" becau we "cannot afford" £76 millions for it. Perh N A L G O can see the "Red Light."

16, Rodney Gardens, S. H. HASSELL
West Wickham, Kent.

PAID BRANCH OFFICERS?

"Should Seek Seats on Councils"

I HAVE long thought it desirable that ea branch of N A L G O should have its o paid local official. With all the problems of po war rehabilitation and reorganisation loomi ahead, I consider that this now becomes almos necessity. The person appointed would take o the work now carried out by the secretary, tr surer, local correspondent, public relatio officer, etc., of the branch.

In voicing this idea, I am not detracting fr the valuable work carried out by Headquart and district staffs, nor do I suggest that th would in any way be superseded; in fact, th position would be strengthened.

I suggest, further, that when local governm elections are resumed, the N A L G O offic of each branch should seek election to the lo council, as an independent candidate. If his work in council chamber and committee would further the aims of N A L G O, h primary duty would be to watch the interests the staff, to press for better conditions of and to take up the cudgels on their behalf

ccessary in the council chamber, where, at oment, assertions giving a wrong idea of onditions may go unanswered.

st other workers' unions have their repre- ives sitting on the council; why not L G O?

obvious objection is, of course, the cost. ould this be so alarming? All branches membership of over 300 could easily sup- full-time official for a 6d. per week per er, bearing in mind that the honoraria now to branch officers would go towards his . If this were too much, a part-time official be appointed and the expenditure reduced ingly—and this method would, of course, to be adopted by the smaller branches.

ving a representative on the council would, I st, bring N A L G O nearer to 100 per cent ership, drawing in those who are still what the Association is doing for them. would have in their own council a man g their cause whom they could approach at ime with their grievances and who could their case without fear of disfavour falling s head.

all times, of course, the official would come the jurisdiction of the executive committee ould conform to its policy. But that policy be bolder were someone able to advance e was not reliant for his job on those to he was stating his case.

rby. F. W. GIBBS.

DING OF "HANSARD"

ccessful Venture

RLIAMENT is today discussing and enact- ing much important legislation which, her we like it or not, will greatly affect all ives both as individuals and as local govern- officers. The chief means we have for g out what is going on is by reading the reports and by listening to the B.B.C. naries. Both these sources of information ecessarily incomplete, especially in war time. occurred to me recently that some of my agues at Lewisham might welcome a closer aintance with "Hansard"—the daily report roceedings of the Houses of Parliament. I ght we would find it instructive, interesting often amusing.

proposed that we should form a group and 40 consecutive issues of "Hansard," the es to be available daily and members to be ed to borrow them overnight. The response xceeded my expectations and has prompted to suggest that other branches might be uraged to adopt a similar scheme.

HARWOOD J. WHITEHEAD.

wisham.

E JOURNAL YOU WANT

G.S." Worth Reading To-day

A. G. THORNE surely has a wide choice of light reading, ranging from "Punch" to mic Cuts"—or "The Jester" and "Won- "! We do not fail to appreciate the humour subtleties of "Hyperion," and are glad of a of it each month, but, if a humble analogy be oned, we cannot live on sweet-meats; bread butter (or "marge") is a more staple and fying diet. Carry on, Mr. Editor! "L.G.S." improved almost out of recognition as com- d with the dull stodginess of "Municipal ice" of a few years ago. Its leaders, special les, and correspondence, by intelligent bers of N A L G O who are neither bores cynics, are greatly appreciated. The paper tone, standing, and is informative and pro- ive. Most of the contributors, by reason of vocations, know what they are talking about, in these days of reconstructive ferment supply s and points of view which are not available other sources—even purely professional or ical journals.

J. YEOMAN.

, Westoe Avenue, South Shields.

S.—On second thoughts, I believe that Mr. rne is only 5 per cent serious. He is probably assing for "Jackass's" position.

TITUTE OF MUNICIPAL TREASURERS AND ACCOUNTANTS (INC.)

EXAMINATIONS—JANUARY, 1946

he regulations relating to the next examinations he Institute which are to be held in January , are now available and may be obtained, free charge, from the Secretary, 1, Buckingham e, Westminster, London, S.W.1.

hese regulations contain full details of the con- ons which will be granted by the Institute ncil to candidates who have served or are ing in the armed forces of the Crown or the chant Navy.

Compensation for Nurse Who Contracted T.B.

A CASE of importance to every nurse has recently been settled in N A L G O's favour.

A staff nurse employed from 1939 to 1943 in a municipal general hospital worked for long periods in a tuberculosis ward, nursing many cases of advanced tuberculosis. In June 1943 she contracted tuberculosis and was off work until last month, when she had recovered sufficiently to take part-time employment.

N A L G O applied on her behalf to the local authority for compensation under the Workmens' Compensation Acts, and finally, through its insurers, the local authority admitted liability. The nurse will be entitled to compensation until she is able to earn as high a salary as she was earning before she became ill.

Many local authorities in the past have refused to pay compensation in cases of this kind on the ground that tuberculosis is not an accident arising out of and in the course of the employment, as required by the Act. So far as is known, only one case has been taken to arbitration and there the county court judge held that the employers were liable. County court decisions are not, however, binding in other courts, and no similar case has reached the High Court.

It is understood that many nurses have contracted tuberculosis after nursing tuberculosis sufferers and, whilst each case must be decided on its merits, there must be many in which compensation ought to be paid. Any member who feels that she is entitled to compensation should, therefore, get in touch with the Association, through her branch secretary.

How the B. & O. Fund Helps Members in Distress

MR. A., a member of N A L G O, contracted tuberculosis three years ago, when he was 34. He was refused admission to a sanatorium because the disease was too far advanced, and his doctor advised him to live in the south. But the whole of his income (half salary and disablement benefit) was needed to maintain his wife and boy aged 3. Later he was superannuated on £1 4s. 10d. a week.

Mr. B., another N A L G O member, died of tuberculosis last year, leaving a widow and two children, a boy of 16 and a girl of 13, with a total income of 10s. a week, plus a few shillings from a lodger. Mrs. B. is crippled with rheumatism and cannot work.

Well, as the late Syd Walker would have said, "What would you do, chums?"

In these cases, happily, it is not what *would* you do, but what *do* you do.

Through the B. & O. Fund, you maintained Mr. A. for a time in Torquay. Since he returned home you have given him 30s. a week, and will go on doing so as long as necessary.

Through the B. & O. Fund, you are giving Mrs. B. 27s. a week, to maintain her and her son. Her daughter is at the Freemasons' boarding school.

These are but two of the hundreds of cases on the books of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund—the Fund which ensures that no member of N A L G O shall ever suffer severe want and distress. But it can do that only with the support of every branch and every member. Here are some of the ways in which that is given:

Worthing's water engineer and his staff sent £20 from the proceeds of munitions work during stand-by civil defence duties.

Harrogate sent £80—£50 from the Corporation's surplus funds from "Holidays at Home, and £30 from the Claro Association, a charity organization run by members of the branch.

Cardiff raised £56 by dances, raffles, whist drives, etc., and added £40 from branch funds.

Stretford has raised £1,000 in the past few years, and is aiming at a further £200 this year.

Ilford collected £7 6s. 9d. at a meeting of its women's sub-committee.

Bacup made £2 2s. with a raffle, to which it added £5 5s. from branch funds.

Windsor sold toys and raised £14 8s. 6d.

Hereford City raised £5 1s. 9d. with a draw for tea sent by a member in the Forces.

Banstead made £3 with a draughts tournament and raffle.

Inglewood raised £11 5s. by raffling and auctioning prizes during social evening.

Tynemouth contributed £4 from departmental boxes.

Sunderland members contributed £1 1s. in lieu of a wreath for deceased member.

Dances and other social activities continue to swell the funds, recent contributions from this source including: **Bebington** £30, **Berkshire C.C.** £8 8s., **Cambridge** £22, **Congleton** £3 3s., **Coventry** £43 8s. 5d., **Dunfermline** £8 16s. 10d., **Egham** £8 8s., **Kesteven** £15, **North Riding** £38 16s., **Peterborough** £65 10s. 6d., **Pontardawe** £40 13s. 6d., **Rochdale** £20 7s. 4d., **Rowley Regis** £20 11s. 9d., **Runcorn Rural** £16 14s., **Twickenham** £22 13s. 8d., **Westmorland** £15 1s.

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NALGO ROLL OF HONOUR

H.M. Forces

KILLED OR DIED IN ACTION

Bent, F. Lt. G., R.A.F., deputy treasurer, Wirral U.D.

Chalk, Pte. G. W., R.A.S.C., education dept., Torquay.

Clarke, A. C., shops inspector, Wembley.

Fowler, L.A.C. H., 24, R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Huyton-with-Roby.

Francis, Sgt. N., R.A.C., treasurer's dept., Wallasey.

Gurling, L. Sgt. E., The Buffs, electricity dept., Bethnal Green.

Killick, Lt. H. W., R.C.S., finance dept., Ruislip-Northwood U.D.

Long, J. R., Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, libraries dept., S. Shields.

Luck, Gnr. J., R.A., libraries dept., Bethnal Green.

McGuire, F. Sgt. G., R.A.F., finance dept., Paisley.

Mulholland, Cpl. B., H.L.I., Jarrow.

Rose, Gnr. W. J., R.A., surveyor's dept., Bethnal Green.

Rothero, S./Sgt. C., R.A.S.C., education dept., Brecon C.C.

Ruth, S. Sgt. L. J., R.A.S.C., libraries dept., Leicester.

Short, L.A.C. R. P., R.A.F., health dept., Durham C.C.

Smith, Gnr. R. B., R. A., Durham C.C.

Watson, P. O. J., R.A.F., health dept., Durham C.C.

Whitfield, Sgt./A.G. J., R.A.F., health dept., Durham C.C.

Whitworth, L./Cpl. F. C., electricity dept., Oldham.

***Williams, Sgt P. D.**, R.A.F., health dept., Durham C.C.

MISSING

Barton, Sgt. J., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Southport.

Bottomley, L.A.C. C., transport dept., Oldham.

Davies, F. Sgt. A., R.A.F., welfare dept., Wolverhampton.

Durham, Sgt. R., R.A.F., public assistance dept., Durham C.C. (presumed killed—see awards).

***Hartley, Sgt. M.**, R.A.F., finance dept., Sutton-in-Ashfield U.D. (presumed killed).

Pleydell, F. Sgt.A.G. H. J., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Bethnal Green (presumed killed).

Richer, D. F., R.A.F., clerk's dept., Ipswich.

Stoddart, F. Sgt. D., R.A.F., Brecon C.C.

Taylor, F./O. J. H., R.A.F., electricity dept., Southport.

Walsh, Sgt. A.G. M., R.A.F., electricity dept., Bethnal Green (presumed killed).

Weaver, Sgt. Gnr. V., R.A.F., welfare dept., Wolverhampton.

Windress, Sgt. P. L., R.A.F., highways dept., North Riding C.C.

PRISONERS OF WAR

Brookfield, Sgt. J., Glider Pilot Regt., treasurer's dept., Southport.

Jupp, P./O. H. E., R.A.F., engineer's dept., Croydon.

Pring, Lt. P. J., S. Staffs Airborne Regt., welfare dept., Wolverhampton.

***Sanders, S./Sgt. S. J.**, R.A.M.C., electricity dept., Croydon (in Germany).

Williams, Pte. D., cleansing dept., Wembley.

**Previously reported missing*

Civilian

KILLED BY ENEMY ACTION

Parish, Miss G. M., libraries dept., Hackney.

AWARDS TO MEMBERS

M.C.

Bezant, Capt. B., R.A. weights and measures dept., Newport, Mon.

Squire Capt N. D., R.A., finance dept., Newport, Mon.

D.F.C.

Hall, F./Lt. G., R.A.F.V.R., health dept., Sunderland—for gallantry and devotion to duty in the execution of air operations.

Pickler, F. Lt. R. A., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Solihull—for gallantry during a raid on Cologne in November, 1944.

A.F.C.

Saward, F./Lt. J. W., health dept., Bermondsey.

ALBERT MEDAL

Connor, Lt. D. M., 33, R.N.V.R., public assistant dept., Swindon (posthumous award)—for saving life at sea. "On March 5, 1944, fire broke out in the starboard corner of the engine-room of one of H.M. motor launches at Beirut. An explosion occurred immediately afterwards and the fire spread rapidly throughout the ship. Lt. Connor straightway organised all the fire-fighting gear on board and sent for civilian and naval fire-fighting assistance. The heat from the burning ship was intense and it was well known that with the burning high octane petrol the ship was likely to blow up at any moment.

"The burning ship was a grave menace to other ships berthed alongside and Lt. Connor made valiant efforts to make fast a tow line so that she could be towed out of port. So great was the heat, however, that the tow-line parted. At about 19.15 a third and more violent explosion occurred in which Lt. Connor lost his life.

"Lt. Connor well knew the risks involved but sacrificed his life in an endeavour to prevent the spread of the fire which might well have become a major conflagration, involving the loss of many lives."

D.C.M.

Straw, Cpl. J., mace bearer, Wembley.

M.M.

Coxon, Sgm. A., R.C.S., clerk's department, Durham C.C.

D.F.M.

Bailey, F./O. G., R.A.F., treasurer's department, Rotherham.

Durham, Sgt. R., R.A.F., public assistance dept., Durham C.C. (presumed killed).

Williams, Sgt./P. D., R.A.F., health department, Durham C.C. (posthumous award).

O.B.E. (Military Division)

Baker, Lt.-Col. W. A. N., M.C., health department, Maidstone (former member of the National Executive Council)—for meritorious service and good work to the 11th (Maidstone) Btn. Home Guard, which he has commanded from May 1940 to the stand-down on December 1944.

Chalke, Lt.-Col. H. D., assistant M. O. Hampstead (previously mentioned in dispatches)—for gallant and distinguished services in

M.B.E.

Chapel, Lt.-Col. J., public assistance department, Leicester.

Trayler, Lt., R.E., engineer's dept., Essex water.

B.E.M.

McBurney, S./Sgt. J., R.A.O.C., treasurer's dept., Halifax.

MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES

Cockburn, Cpl. C. E., R.C.S., weights and measures dept., Durham C.C.

Druce, Cpl. W. H., R.A.F., baths manager, Hampstead.

Graham, Cpl. W., R.A.F., High Teams Inspection, Gateshead.

Joyce, Sgt. F. C., R.A.F., education department, Durham C.C.

Robinson, H./S./D. M., R.N., health department, Durham C.C.—for distinguished submarine service.

Spedding, F./Lt. G., D.F.C., R.A.F., engineering dept., Durham C.C.

Garrison Surrendered to NALGO Member

It was to a member of NALGO, Lt. J. C. Ramsey, of the county engineer's staff, Dumbartonshire, and now in the Royal Engineers, that the German garrison of Boulogne surrendered some weeks ago.

Boulogne was being attacked by Canadian infantry, supported by tanks of a British R.E. assault squadron. Describing the incident, Lt. Ramsey said :

" I was in charge of a troop, and under covering fire from an assault team of R.E., I moved forward to the main gate of the citadel—the old town of Boulogne, which is surrounded by a high wall with four gateways, rather like York. The gate was blocked with eight horizontal steel rails, each about seven feet high. We shot the rails away, exploded a number of land mines behind the gate, and then moved forward. My tank slid into a shell hole and stuck, and I had climbed out and ordered another tank to tow us out, when I noticed white flags being waved from the top of the walls.

" I turned my gun on the Germans, and ordered them to advance to where I was standing. About thirty Germans came forward with a German officer who told me he was the adjutant and that the commander of the garrison wished to surrender to me.

" He then looked at my two pips rather doubtfully, and asked if he might surrender to an officer of equal rank to his commander. Eventually, a Canadian colonel came along and the surrender was then formally agreed upon by the garrison commander, who felt that his honour had been saved."

32 Members in New Year Honours Li

THE names of many members of NALGO appeared in the King's New Year Honours. Every effort has been made to ensure that the following list is complete, but branches are asked to send the names of any of their members who have been inadvertently omitted :

Civil Division

C.B.E.

A. L. Binns, director of education, West Riding C.C.—president of West Riding branch and chairman of branch executive committee.

Col. F. Hibbert, water engineer, Liverpool—for services to civil defence.

L. E. Stephens, clerk and A.R.P. controller, Warwickshire C.C.

O.B.E.

E. Bellingham, town clerk and district A.R.P. controller, Stockton-on-Tees.

Miss G. M. Cordell, principal matron, public health dept., L.C.C.

E. J. Dennis, superintendent registrar, Liverpool S. district.

G. Dixon, engineer and manager, gas dept., Nottingham.

Major T. Hepburn, deputy county A.R.P. controller for Kent.

H. A. Hield, town clerk, Torquay and A.R.P. controller, Torbay area.

J. E. Lewis, borough engineer and surveyor and deputy A.R.P. controller, Sunderland—vice-president of Sunderland branch.

C. S. Robinson, town clerk, Blackburn.

P. Smallman, town clerk and district A.R.P. controller, Weymouth.

C. H. Walker, valuer and rehousing officer, Croydon—a vice-president of Croydon branch.

A. B. Williamson, medical officer, Portsmouth—for services to civil defence.

M.B.E.

J. B. Abbey, surveyor and district A.R.P. controller, Seaham, Co. Durham.

S. G. Bacon, O/C training and operations, u southern (vi) regional column, chief engine assistant, Solihull—for services to civil de

J. E. Brayley, A.R.P. officer, Swansea.

K. P. Brow, deputy county surveyor, East Su —for services to civil defence.

D. H. Charlesworth, borough treasurer, Wa and hon. secretary, Walsall Savings mittee—former president, Walsall branch

L. V. Gordon, A.R.P. sub-controller, Cate and Warlingham.

G. R. Millard, engineer, South Gloucester Internal Drainage Board, deputy A sub-controller, fuel overseer, and food o Thornbury R.D.—past president S.W. cestershire branch.

H. H. Miller, secretary-steward, Langho Epi Colony, Blackburn ; lately hon. general tary, N.A.A.L.G.E.

Capt. B. H. Stacey, M.C., chief warden A.R.P. officer, Lambeth.

E. Turner, hon. secretary, Weston-super- Savings Committee.

Miss A. Whalley, matron, Pinder Fields E. hospital and West Riding mental hos Wakefield.

B.E.M.

R. E. Hall, co-ordinating officer, civil de sub-control, Amesbury R.D.

S. Julius, post warden, Bermondsey.

C. V. Long, chief sanitary inspector and bill officer, Mablethorpe and Sutton U.D.

L. Martin, mortuaries superintendent, Plym

G. L. Pitt, civil defence ambulance o Worcestershire C.C.

A. H. Russell, deputy officer-in-charge, L heavy rescue service, Bermondsey.

Military Division

B.E.M.

F. Sgt. C. Shaw, R.A.F., treasurer's Ilkeston.

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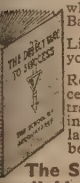

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/ORLD EVENTS BROUGHT TO LIFE

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Ending Wartime Jobs Scandal : Croydon "In the Money" : Leicester Entertains

By "ABINGDON"

ALTHOUGH the National Whitley Council has twice—in 1940 and again last year—appealed to local authorities to make only temporary appointments during the war, recent experience has shown a growing tendency to ignore the appeal. During November and December last, for example, of 300 vacancies advertised by local authorities—vacancies, for all manner of posts and in all grades—no fewer than 242 offered permanent appointments, against only 121 which stipulated that the position was temporary.

This is a deplorable state of affairs. Close on 40,000 local government officers, most of them young, are now in the Forces, fighting on battle-fronts all over the world. Of what use to them will be the pledges of reinstatement, the promise of a square deal, and the plans for resettlement and rehabilitation, if they are to find all the good jobs filled and all avenues to promotion blocked in their absence?

NALGO is tackling the problem vigorously. It is asking the local authority associations to reaffirm the resolution agreed to by their representatives on the National Whitley Council. It is writing direct to every local authority in the country, pointing out, in strong terms, how gravely officers on war service are being prejudiced. It is seeking the support of the Government. And it is urging every branch to contest permanent appointments with the utmost vigour. If necessary, it will appeal direct to the electors to compel their representatives to fall into line with what is undoubtedly the sentiment of the nation that the interests of its fighting men shall be protected.

But, if it is to succeed, the Association must have the support of every member. Who are the people who take these permanent appointments? Most are themselves local government officers and members of NALGO. If they, too, would unitedly support the Association's policy and refuse to apply for, or to accept, permanent positions during the war, the problem would be largely solved.

Such a course involves personal sacrifice, sometimes of a high order. But does that voluntary sacrifice compare with the compulsory sacrifice of the fighting man, required to risk his life and to face danger and hardship for four, five, and possibly six years, and then, at the end of it all, to face the prospect of finding his promotion blocked and his career jeopardised by those who, spared his ordeals, have been able to get ahead in his absence?

No criticism is here implied of those who—often unwillingly and through no fault of their own—have remained at home during the war. They, too have often endured hardship and danger, and they, too, warrant every consideration. All we ask, and all the fighting man would ask, is that, after the war, each should have an equal chance, in a fair field, with no favour.

£800 in Eight Hours!

CROWDS so great that the police had to be called in to control them; local dignitaries unable to get in; and a net profit of £800 in eight hours—such was the achievement of **Croydon** branch when it held a Christmas bazaar in Britain's most-bombed borough!

The bazaar, held in the town's main shopping centre, took the place of four fetes the branch had planned to hold in the summer to raise money for the Red Cross Prisoners of War Fund, but which the flying-bomb attacks abruptly cancelled. For months, members, their relatives, and their friends, had devoted their limited spare time to the making of gifts of all kinds, and thousands were assembled. Other members gave many hours to decorating the building and providing a big illuminated Christmas tree, and yet others staffed the stalls and spent the following day—a Sunday—clearing up.

Croydon should be—and is—proud of its town hall staff who rounded off a year of harder work, more constant terror, and greater devastation than probably any other group of British local government officers has endured with such magnificent aplomb.

Leicester Gives a Party

AS a public servant, the local government officer ought, in his leisure hours as well as in working time, to "get around" and play as prominent a part in local life as does the parson or the doctor. Yet how many still "keep themselves to themselves," both personally and collectively—to their own disadvantage and that of their fellow citizens!

NALGO EXAMINATIONS

The next NALGO examinations will be held, circumstances permitting, on May 23, 24 and 25, 1945, at centres to be arranged later.

Application to sit must be made on the prescribed form, obtainable from the general secretary, 24, Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1, and must be returned to Headquarters not later than March 1. Late applications will, however, be accepted until April 1, provided that each application is accompanied by a late entry fee of 5s. for the intermediate and 10s. for the final examination.

Not so **Leicester** branch, which recently, on the suggestion of its women's sub-committee, entertained a party of wounded ex-service men. The women undertook the feeding with such effect that, though the tables groaned beneath trifles, cakes, and delicacies of all kinds, there was enough left over to fill several big hampers which were sent back with the men to the convalescent home, and to provide a reserve of "non-perishables" for the next time. It was the same story with helpers; though many who offered had to be refused, more attended for five hours' hard work than normally attend the branch annual meeting—a fact in which the secretary, S. Dawson, reads a moral for branch executives.

"It was most heartening to find so much willingness to help, especially from members who take no share in the ordinary work of the branch," Mr. Dawson tells me. "The wounded men obviously enjoyed themselves, and hoped that similar entertainments would be organised in other towns." Well, why not?

Three Points of View

THERE are three parties to local government—councillors, officers, and citizens—and all have a right to be heard. **Walthamstow** borough council is giving effect to this oft-

[illegible] a good one, and on February 17, W. O. [illegible] deputy town clerk of Brighton [illegible] of NALGO's N.E.C., will talk about [illegible] government from the officer's point of [illegible] A month later, on March 17, speakers nom[illegible] by a number of representative local organi[illegible] will discuss local government from the cle[illegible] point of view. All are welcome to these me[illegible] held in Walthamstow town hall at 3 p.m[illegible] I hope that many London members will ta[illegible] opportunity of seeing themselves as othe[illegible] them.

Training the Young Idea

"*Think, then, of all the grand benefits w[illegible] through paying rates which otherwise we co[illegible] afford. We may grumble when rates rise, b[illegible] all for the good of the town. Every cit[illegible] getting exceptional value for his money.*"

So ran the concluding paragraph of the[illegible] by which Pearl Lawson, a 14-year-old p[illegible] Bedford's Silver Jubilee School won first p[illegible] a competition organised by **Bedford** branc[illegible] open to all elementary school children in th[illegible] Her essay, and the many others submitted, s[illegible] a wide knowledge of what the borough [illegible] and its staff do, and the benefits they prov[illegible] the citizens. I wish more branches would[illegible] similar methods of ensuring that their [illegible] ratepayers know something about the [illegible] pump and how it works.

Plea from "Southern England"

"THERE was enemy air activity over So[illegible] England; damage and casualties w[illegible] ported." To provincial readers, this[illegible] paragraph in the papers probably convey[illegible] more than does the announcement of [illegible] times. To dwellers in some parts of "So[illegible] England," it means, in the words of on[illegible] wrote to me the other day, that "normal [illegible] time pursuits are in abeyance, and life is co[illegible] to kitchen, scullery and cellar."

Pointing out that at least 75 per cent [illegible] household chattels are today unused an[illegible] "at any moment a rocket may destroy t[illegible] this member suggests that others, living outs[illegible] danger area, would render a service to thei[illegible] line colleagues were they willing to give[illegible] room of their houses in which to stor[illegible] unused furniture until the risk is over.

If readers within, say, 100 miles of Londo[illegible] are willing to do this, and any others in "So[illegible] England" who would like to take advan[illegible] their kindness, will write to me, I shall be[illegible] to put them in touch with one another.

SCOTTISH NOTES: Salaries: Resettleme[illegible] Equal Pay Our T[illegible]

ALL who read the President's New Year message will have realised that NALGO is about to enter the most difficult period in its history.

Some may wonder how, in the face of so many serious and urgent post-war economic problems, we can hope to achieve national scales, a "square deal" for our members returning from the Forces, and improved status and conditions for women.

Salaries in Scotland are generally lower than in England, so that to effect improvement will cost money. That may not be so difficult in the larger authorities, but in the smaller—the majority in Scotland—there may be attempts to frustrate overdue improvement.

Ratepayers and councillors are right in demanding that the local government service shall be efficient and that it shall have the best brains in its employ. There is only one way to provide efficiency and to attract the best people, and that is to provide conditions of service and salaries which will attract and retain them.

There are some places where the local authority is one of the biggest employers of labour, but its salaries are lower than those which can be obtained in other forms of industry. How can such authorities expect to obtain the best qualified personnel?

It will not be easy to obtain reasonable national scales, but we must impress on the employers the justice of our claims. Ample evidence is already available of the standards being provided for post-war conditions, the most notable being the new salaries for teachers.

The economic conditions of women will, of course, depend to a large extent on the report of the Royal Commission on Equal [illegible] NALGO policy on this question is well [illegible] and we shall take advantage of every oppo[illegible] to assert our claims.

The resettlement of members returnin[illegible] the Forces is a major problem. We have [illegible] taken steps to secure adequate provision fo[illegible] rehabilitation, and we hope that, within th[illegible] month or two, the joint industrial coun[illegible] endorse the recommendations already ap[illegible] by its counterpart in England.

More than that, however, is the person[illegible] of their return. It will not be easy for t[illegible] adjust themselves to "civvy" life. Part [illegible] job is to help them to settle down to fit ther[illegible] into changed conditions. That is a job [illegible] each of us must undertake. Sympathy, [illegible] standing, and a generous spirit will be nee[illegible] small contribution to the promotion o[illegible] happiness and contentment.

Obituary

Mr. J. G. Nicholas and W. M. Stevens

We regret to record the deaths of

J. G. Nicholas, master of Caersws public [illegible] ance institution, president of Montgomery [illegible] and a member of the North Wales distric[illegible] mittee and the staff side of the North Wal[illegible] vincial council.

W. M. Stevens, deputy town [illegible] Wycombe since 1941, and formerly [illegible] at Hendon.

ılaries and Service Conditions

ORTH WESTERN AND NORTH WALES

Lancashire and Cheshire provincial council has d 20 out of 21 grading appeals submitted on behalf ers of **Rochdale C.B., Radcliffe B., Ellesmere** and **Westmorland R.D.s.**

Helens C.B. and **Widnes B.** have adopted new g schemes prepared by the provincial council, which t to many officers.

NORTH EASTERN

th Shields C.B., Jarrow B., and **Seaton Valley** have adopted the provincial council sick pay regu-

idlesbrough C.B. has agreed to increase the s of the superintendent and matron of the children's from £130 to £160 and £85 to £130 respectively, noluments in each case of £100 p.a., with effect from y 1, 1944.

kesley R.D. has agreed to regrade its rating officers ollectors from grade C (1) to grade C (£240+15—of the provincial council scales ; to increase the nces for office accommodation ; and to increase the owances of the rating officers and sanitary inspector.

sborough U.D. has agreed to transfer two officers grade B (£220) to grade C (£240—£300).

YORKSHIRE

rborough B. has adopted the full provincial council and regraded the staff.

provincial council scheme for payment of salary g illness has been adopted by 36 authorities and the d scales for women by 34 authorities.

ley, Keighley, and **Pontefract B.s., Hemsworth** and the **River Ouse (Yorks.) Catchment Board** decided to increase the fraction for non-contributory e to 60ths : **Doncaster C.B.** has decided to grant and **Holmfirth U.D.** 80ths.

field U.D. has adopted the Bolton Award on war e pay from November 1, 1944.

SOUTH EASTERN

trict membership for 1944 has reached a new peak of 6,729, and the increase during the year is the t on record. Every branch submitted annual ns before the closing date.

ildford, Maidstone, and **Rye B.s,' Tonbridge , Battle** and **Hambledon R.D.s** have adopted the ncial council salary scales.

authorities have adopted the provincial council's l sick pay scheme, due to come into operation on l.

o new branches—**Tenterden and District** and **e Bay and Whitstable**—have been formed for the **of Tenterden B.** and **Tenterden R.D.** and **Herne** nd **Whitstable U.D.'s.**

oint consultative committee has been formed for hes in the **Sevenoaks/Tonbridge** area.

SOUTHERN

rkshire C.C. has adopted, from April 1, 1944, the ncial council salary scales with one additional section clerical division (£330+15—£345) and three further s beyond the maximum of the provincial council —Grade E, £530+20—£590 ; Grade F, £600+25— ; Grade G, £650+25—£700.

ckinghamshire C.C. has adopted, from April 1, the provincial council salary scales and service con-ns, with the provision that the new scales do not to temporary staff. Additional increments are ed in Grades F (i) and F (ii) for specified examina-certificates.

ton and **Bullingdon R.D.s** have adopted the pro-l council scales and service conditions.

reham U.D. and **Amersham R.D.** have adopted rovincial council service conditions.

SOUTH WESTERN

deford B. and **Watchet U.D.** have become con-nt members of the provincial council, and Bideford dopted the provincial council salary scales.

erborne U.D. has adopted the Dorset C.C. salary

UTH WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE

epstow, Llantrisant, and **Pontardawe R.D.'s** accepted the principle of 60ths for non-contributory ce.

nelly R.D. has adopted the following revised ay scheme from April 1 next :

officers (apart from heads and deputies) including nporaries—one day for each month of service, with a ximum of 12 working days.

r officers (except heads and deputies) with ten years' vice and over—18 working days.

ties—18 working days.

s of departments—21 working days.

e appeals committee of the South Wales provincial il has granted an application for the up-grading of school welfare officers of **Neath B.** education com-e to Grade C—£225—£255, commencing at £235.

e appeals committee also, after hearing appeals on of nine officers of **Neath B,** recommended that odel grading scheme should be prepared by the ncial council. Both parties to the appeal agreed to recommendation.

appeals by the district officer, the appeals com-e decided that two officers of **Abercarn U.D.** ld be up-graded and a third placed on the maximum present grade at £255—an increase of £30 p.a.

Cost of Living 30.3% Up

e Ministry of Labour cost of living index increased oint last month to 202, representing an increase of per cent since the outbreak of war.

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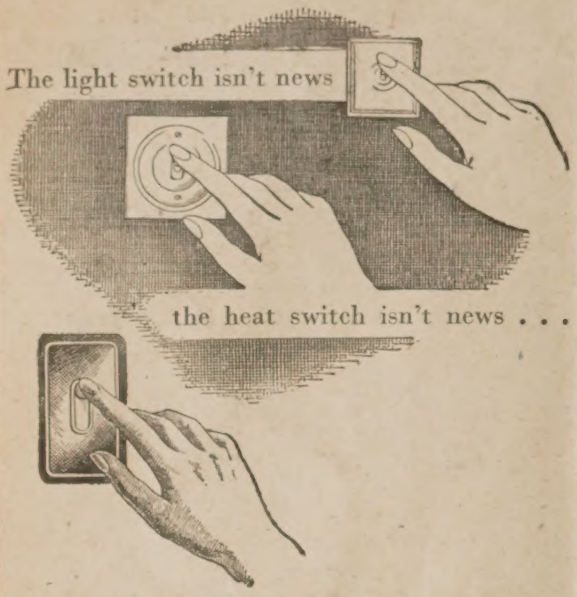

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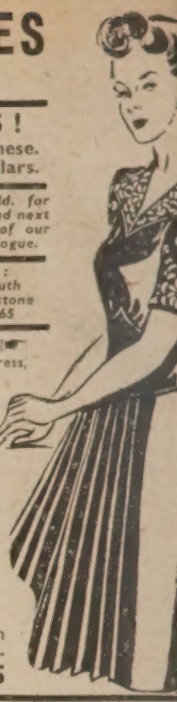

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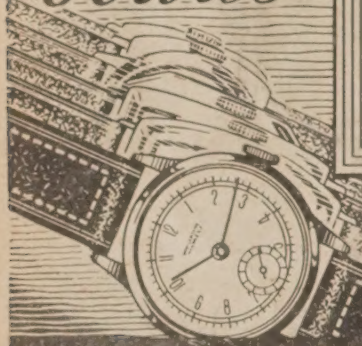

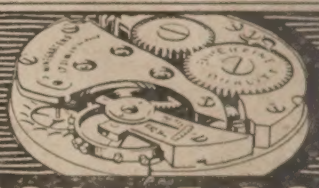

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